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HOW TO WIN AT NINTENDO SPORTS GAMES

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Introduction

Welcome, to the only book in the wide world of videogame sports that can—

Teach you how to knock the stuffing out of Mike Tyson!

Show you moves that will let you out-dribble Michael Jordan!

Help you outskate the brash Edmonton ice hockey team!

Give you batting tips, tackling tips, golfing tips, skiing tips, wrestling tips, diving tips, fishing tips, and you-name-it tips for dozens of popular sports games! (The only tips we *can't* give you are *fingertips*, which you'll probably wear out beating up your videoopponents!)

First, though, a word to those of you who have the other books in our series (*How to Win at Nintendo® Games 1, 2, and 3*). You devoted Nintendo game-ites will notice that in addition to showing you how to be a video jock on a slew of new cartridges, we're revisiting a couple of superpopular games from the other

books. The key word is *revisiting*: never ones to warm the bench, we've continued to play those classic games and have gathered *new* tips and strategies to add to our pointers on those cartridges.

You may also notice that the format of this book is ever-so-slightly different from the earlier books. Instead of having "Beginner's Strategy" and "Advanced Strategy" sections for each game, we've combined them.

Why?

Because beginner's strategies are worth zip in most sports games. These cartridges don't start out easy, the way combat or quest games do. They start out like tidal waves, so you have to be your best from the opening gun. We've also incorporated the "Training Tips" and "Par" into the strategy section, so that all the useful game-mastering information is in one place.

However, we've added two categories, "Simulation" and "Cross Reference," the meanings of which—along with the meanings of the other categories—are as follows:

Type: What kind of game it is.

Manufacturer: Who made it? Let's face it: games by some manufacturers are more consistently excellent than those of others.

Objective: What you have to accomplish.

Layout: What the screen looks like.

Hero: What kind of athlete are you, and what's the range of your abilities?

Opponents/Obstacles: What kind of athletes are you up against, and what are their abilities?

Menu: How many variations are there, and how many players can join in at once?

Scoring: How many points do you get, and for what?

Strategy: What are the winning maneuvers, secret passwords, and other hot tips that will allow you to taste the thrill of victory?

Rating: Is the game worth buying—or renting?

We'll let you know, based on four criteria:

Challenge: Is it still going to be fun after a few days?

Graphics: Are they colorful and detailed, or should you spend the money on *Genesis* instead?

Sound: What are the sound effects like? Is the music entertaining, or annoying?

Simulation: Most important of all, how close does the cartridge come to capturing the excitement and feel of the actual game?

Cross References: What other cartridges are available based on the same sport, and are they any good?

We've also included a section on Nintendo's popular Game Boy sports cartridges, which are hotter than seats at the Super Bowl.

In 1908 Jack Norworth and Albert Von Tilzer wrote a song called "Take Me Out to the Ball Game." Thanks to Nintendo, the ball game has come to you! So turn the page and . . . "*plaaaaay ballll!*"

Baseball Stars

Type: Diamond action.

Manufacturer: SNK.

Objective: Pitch, field, and bat with precision so that your players can move from base to base.

Layout: The player looks out at the infield from above and behind the batter. When the ball is hit, the screen scrolls with it.

Hero: Videogamers can do everything real baseball players can. They also have the ability to select a team type—such as good defense, strong pitchers, veterans, etc., as outlined in the instruction booklet—or they can build a team, mixing and matching players with different abili-

ties—also discussed in the instructions. The team names are bizarre—Ninja Black Sox and Ghastly Monsters are typical—and though that has some bearing on the players' appearance, it doesn't affect their skills on the field. You can also create your own team name. Stay away from the veteran team: they make few errors, but they're the weakest overall. Go with the power hitters or the consistent hitters, in that order.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: It's one player against the computer or another player.

Scoring: One run for every circuit of the diamond. Monetary rewards are proffered in certain contests (see instructions for details).

Strategy: *Baseball Stars* plays pretty much like regular baseball, as far as batting and pitching go. If you hit the ball too early (tip of the bat) or too late (near your hands), it'll go foul or to left or right field. Hit the ball in the center of the bat and it'll head up the middle. Early swings (for a righty) and late ones (for a lefty) are better at the top of the lineup: a blooper along the third-base line is almost guaranteed to get you a

single. Bunts are also an excellent way to get on base, but *only* if you pick a fast team. If you can master the line drive down the first-base line, you can usually get a double out of it.

Fielding, there are two problems. First, many players tend to be in a rush and overthrow the base. Take a moment longer to determine exactly where you want the ball to go, *then* throw. Second, as in all the other baseball games, you can't see the outfielders until the ball reaches them. That makes getting them into position a last-minute deal—though the *good* news here is that the figures are relatively large, which makes it easier for them to get around quickly. Still, it's a good idea to pitch so that the ball won't go beyond the infield. Fast balls, inside, usually fill the bill.

If the ball does get into the outfield, take the rather unorthodox tack of sliding for it. And not just a short slide: *keep* on sliding till you get the ball. You'll cover ground faster than if you run. And if someone hits with men on first and third, don't go for a play at second: even if you've got great fielding, the man on third will make it home for sure.

When playing the computer, be aware of the fact that it never commits an error and tends to stop even the best stealers cold. On the other hand, when playing a human, be prepared to run, even on a pop out: because it's so easy to throw the ball to the wrong base, you have a very good chance of succeeding! If you want to steal on the pitch, do so only when you see the pitcher begin his windup.

If you can bat second, do so. If you find yourself down a run or two in the last inning, you can make trades and substitutions that wouldn't be wise in the middle of a game, in order to get yourself some power.

Finally, one of the neatest things you can do is put together a really tip-top women's team. After you access the Make Team option, move down, right, left, down, down, right, up, up, down, up, down, up and press A. You'll be faced with the question, "What is a wren?" Replace that with your answer, "A Bird." (Make sure you put in the period.) Another question will appear: "When isn't it?" Your answer should be, "When it is." Then you can pick a team as usual . . . but players will be super-powerful.

Rating: The absolute, no-doubt-about-it best of the baseball games for Nintendo.

Challenge: B

Graphics: B (the players are realistic, not pudgy little doughboys, and the animation of the players and the ball are excellent)

Sound: B (energetic and energizing music)

Simulation: B

Cross References: See separate entries on *Tecmo Baseball*, *Bases Loaded*, *Major League Baseball*, *RBI Baseball*, and *Game Boy Baseball*.

Bases Loaded

Type: Major league baseball.

Manufacturer: Jaleco.

Objective: Whiff your foes when you pitch, and bomb 'em when you bat.

Layout: You're situated behind the pitcher, whether you're pitching or batting. When the ball is hit, you get a bird's-eye view of the infield; as the ball flies toward the outfield, the screen scrolls in that direction.

Hero: You can control the pitching and batting as described in the instruction booklet. You have a wide variety of teams and pitchers to choose from. The strengths and weaknesses of the players are *not*

discussed in the instruction booklet, so—as a top-notch manager—it's a good idea for you to make your own chart for future reference.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: One player can battle the computer, or two players can fight each other.

Scoring: You earn one point for each trip around the diamond.

Strategy: Because of the many possible combinations of pitches and batters, it's impractical to list which pitch works best against individual batters, and vice versa. There are, however, some general strategies—some of them fair, some of them not. First, the fair ones.

Pitching to the computer, if you find a throw that works, *don't* use it again on the next pitch. The computer falls for the same throw just twenty-five percent of the time. If you manage to get a called strike—as opposed to a swing and a miss—throw the next ball outside. The computer will usually swing.

Fielding, start moving in your outfielders as soon as a ball goes sailing their way. Though you won't see them till the screen scrolls down, they will be moving

in nonetheless, giving you a head start on the ball. Just be careful not to overshoot the ball, since it'll continue to roll and your slow-running fielders will have to chase it. If you do manage to catch a pop fly, you can almost always pick off one or more of the computer's base runners, since they take hefty leads.

When batting, always have a look at the catcher's mitt. It'll tell you exactly where the pitcher will be aiming his ball.

Among the unfair tactics, there are two excellent ones. First, before and during your pitch, jockey the control pad or joystick quickly from side to side. You'll throw a called strike against the computer over eighty percent of the time. That also works against human players . . . provided they don't swing, of course.

More successful, though, is a "paralyzer play" which you can use against the computer team. (This doesn't work unless you use it from game one in any series. Don't try to use it in conjunction with the passwords below.) Select a left-handed pitcher, wait until the batter

takes his warmup swings, then move the pitcher to the left side of the mound. Hold the control pad or joystick down, then press the A button to pitch. The computer batter will stand stone still. Repeat for every pitch, and you'll have a no-hitter for nearly five innings. When the batters finally start hitting, go to a relief lefty and repeat. (You'll throw a few balls each inning, but nothing that'll put your opponent in a scoring position.)

Another secret trick will enable you to pitch a perfect game. Choose N.Y., then pick Shots to pitch. Hit the A button, and when he starts his wind-up, press the controller to the upper right. After four innings, switch to Coles and do same, except that you must press the controller to the upper left. In the ninth inning, go to Errico, and do the same as you did for Coles.

One fun thing to do is hit batters on the head and watch 'em steam. This happens only after the first third of the game; the most volatile batters are Philly's Oko, Kansas's Lynn, D.C.'s Fendy, Hawaii's Debro, Boston's Frieda, Miami's Warner, L.A.'s Bacon, N.Y.'s Star, Texas's Marcus,

Jersey's Paste, Omaha's Caras, and Utah's Agua. In general you can get most of the lineup's third batters to go crazy after a beanball.

Should you wish to get a head start in playoff-bound action, here are a few codes you can use, all of which bring you into pennant competition using a variety of teams:

EDGEBFH: N.Y. vs D.C. 7 games into the race

FBEDGEH: Miami vs Jersey 10 games in

EBEDFGH: Miami vs Jersey 20 games in

EDEBFGH: D.C. vs Jersey 22 games in

EBDEFGH: Miami vs Jersey 24 games in

EBEFDGH: Boston vs D.C. 24 games in

EDBEFGH: Jersey vs Boston 26 games in

GEEDFBH: Miami vs Jersey 41 games in

EGEBDFH: D.C. vs Boston 43 games in

GEDEBFH: N.Y. vs Jersey 45 games in

BEEDGFH: N.Y. vs Jersey 51 games in

FEDGEBH: Kansas vs Miami 55 games in

BEDGEFH: Miami vs Philly 55 games in

EFEDBGH: Miami vs Boston 60 games in

EFEBDGH: D.C. vs Boston 60 games in

EFDEBGH: N.Y. vs Jersey 64 games in

EFGEBDH: N.Y. vs D.C. 65 games in

FEEDBGH: Miami vs Boston 70 games in

BEEDFGH: N.Y. vs Jersey 70 games in
FEEBDGH: D.C. vs Boston 70 games in
FEDEBGH: Jersey vs N.Y. 74 games in
DEBFEGH: Boston vs Jersey 74 games in
BEDFEGH: Boston vs Kansas 74 games in
BEDEFGH: Boston vs Miami 74 games in
DNBHJGH: Boston vs Texas 74 games in
CBIDNEP: N.Y. vs Jersey 80 games in
JAELECO: final game of season as Jersey
(It'll say 38, but if you win you'll have
85 victories.)

Rating: As with *Tecmo Baseball*, it's fun to experiment with the teams, finding out who's good at what and trying out different pitches. Otherwise, the game has too many flaws to recommend it.

Challenge: C- (you can't see the outfielders until the ball is directly over them, and their throws to different bases are frustratingly slow)

Graphics: C (adequate; nothing more)

Sound: F (not only are the crowd sounds and music bad, but the bat hits the ball with a metallic clang! Are these guys using aluminum bats *and* balls?)

Simulation: D

Cross References: See *Tecmo Baseball* entry

for a list of other baseball cartridges covered in this book. Another game you can buy is *Baseball Simulator 1.000*. In that game you can choose the number of games in a season, from five to 165. Up to six teams can compete for a pennant, and you can construct your own team or use a prefabricated one. The key tips for *Baseball Simulator* are: when a runner's on third, don't try to bunt him home. You'll never succeed. Also, throw the ball inside. Not only will this usually produce easily fielded grounders, but it causes less of a drain on the pitcher's energy. One interesting novelty here is that not all of the pitchers handle the pressure of the playoffs very well. Scout them wisely before going into the big games!

The Black Bass

Type: Fishing game.

Manufacturer: Hot-B USA Inc.

Objective: You're one of two hundred people taking part in a fishing tournament, and you move up through the ranks by catching bass. The higher your ranking, the more lures are available to you.

Layout: There are four different lakes, and you access each successive lake only by hauling in certain amounts of fish. The regions of good fishing—pointed out in the instruction booklet—are always the same in Lake Amada and in Japan Lake. They change in Lake More and San Lake. When you cast and fish, the view is always from overhead.

Hero: Your fisher has the ability to row to any part of the lake, change lures, cast and reel in the line with or without a fish.

Opponents: Fish are your foes.

Menu: There is only the one-player game.

Scoring: Fish weigh different amounts. The heftier your catch, the faster you increase your total poundage of fish and, thus, the quicker you increase the number of lakes you can fish. The only thing you can lose—apart from the fish, while reeling it in—are lures. This occurs when the fish leads your line off the sides of the screen, or when the struggle takes too long.

Strategy: To begin with, the good news is you can't snap up all the fish in a given lake. If the screen says there's good fishing where you've stopped, then the good fishing will continue there for the rest of the game. (It's a pain, though, to access this information: when you want to read the menu screen, you have to cast, then reel in the line before you can do so. Dumb.) The first order of business is to make yourself a chart showing the possible weather conditions in the game—

clear, cloudy, light rain, and heavy rain—and to match the ideal lure to each kind of weather. Silver is good in clear weather, red in cloudy, blue in rain. Also, match the lures themselves to the time of day. Pencil bait, frogs, and shallow runners are best at mornings and nights, when the bass come to the shore. Use spinners and plastic worms during the day. With a chart you can tell at a glance what you need for any given condition.

Casting is simple, though not if you read the instructions. The directions fail to tell you that the second time you hit the A button should be when the bar below is still red. That is, you press the A button again while the red bar is ascending or descending. The fuller the bar, the longer the cast.

The trick to reeling in the fish is simple: don't let them drag your line too deep. If you see the gauge begin to plummet precipitously, let up on all but the B button until it returns to near-normal. Then begin bringing the line in once again.

Some general tips. Don't cast the lure

too far left or right. You'll lose it. When you see a bass, your inclination will be to reel the lure in slowly in an attempt to draw the fish closer to the boat. If that worked, it would make for less fighting time. Unfortunately, if you do this for more than five seconds, the fish will almost certainly get fed up and swim away. Better to fight the gillster than lose it. If you *do* lose a fish, or if it happens to swim away, reel in and cast again quickly to that same spot. Sometimes the bass will still be in the neighborhood. (The instructions suggest that you can try drawing it back by jiggling the control pad/stick in the opposite direction. This *rarely* works.)

As for the casting process itself, two maneuvers are best for suckering in fish: moving your lure slowly from side to side in slow, graceful sweeps, or just wiggling the lure slightly in one spot (press up on the control pad, or tap lightly on the A button, depending upon the lure). Whatever you do, don't hit huts, islands, or other objects. Not only will your lure get stuck, forcing you to reel in and start again, but the noise will frighten away

the fish. Give the lure fifteen seconds in one spot. If a fish doesn't show up, reel the line in slowly, stopping now and then for five seconds to see if a fish arrives. Keep watching the top of the screen: fish usually come from there. It'd be a shame if you moved your lure down when prey finally arrived (moving down causes the screen to scroll toward the top, carrying the fish away with it).

Here are codes you can use, each of which brings you farther along, with more fish in your net.

4S4BDOO (two letter O's) **LRISSUQ5I**

ZCZWYEBBWSIZFTUR

512R50 (zero) **FAP0** (zero) **L45XO**

(letter O) **5**

H35PITRZ5YSO (letter O) **PKBS**

QUSFRZYN3VDE1YME

RZNUZNCNG5DLFO (letter O) **MO**

(letter O)

FD1INNOO (two letter O's) **4BWDWLKG**

UDETE3O (letter O) **M0** (zero) **LFHY0** (zero)

WT

F2RUHS5E0 (zero) **UE35ATS**

QQRT1RDXIBLO (letter O) **0** (zero) **IW3**

CFYBQXLE2GXY5NUY

Another important pair of codes: the instructions tell you to input MIRUN instead of your own name at the beginning of the game. This makes the tournament a little easier. However, the entire fishing process will be easier still if you punch in the name HBMAX.

Rating: Playing this cartridge is sort of like watching Dan Rather read the news: you get what you tuned in for, but you yearn for a little excitement now and then! Unlike real fishing, where at the very least you get some sun and fresh air, this cartridge is a complete yawn for anyone but the devoted rod and reeler. The password is also a pain: you can't get it without exiting the program, after which you have to input the long code to start over. Bad planning.

Challenge: C

Graphics: C

Sound: B+ (excellent splashing water sounds)

Simulation: B+

Cross References: The only other game with a water dweller is *Jaws*. That's not very good either, but at least it's got some action. Suggestion: if a software company

does want to give us another fishing cartridge, let's have Ahab chasing the white whale.

Blades of Steel

Type: Ice Hockey.

Manufacturer: Konami.

Objective: Outskating your adversary and knocking the Puck into the goal

Layout: Players watch the Rink from about ten rows up during regular play. When there's a penalty shot, the point of view shifts to just behind the shoulder of the player taking the shot.

Hero: Players skate, shoot the Puck, pass, and crash into one another in order to steal the Puck. The goalies shift from side to side to protect the cage.

Opponents: Same as *Hero*, though your little brother is not going to give you the same

hard-skating opposition as the tough computer!

Menu: One player can take to the ice against the computer or against another player.

Scoring: Points are earned by hitting the Puck into the goal. Time penalties are assessed for a variety of infractions, as described in the instruction booklet.

Strategy: In the interest of presenting all kinds of opinions, it's our duty to report that many players consider Toronto the best team to select and Chicago the worst. Frankly, we can't see much of a difference at all—but draw your own conclusions.

One of the errors many players commit is breathing a sigh of relief once they've won the face-off. In later levels the computer'll swoop in and snatch the Puck before you can say "Bye-bye Stanley Cup." Don't let your concentration flag in this game, or you're a dead Canuck.

To win the face-off most of the time *and* get into good scoring position, push the controller or joystick down or up toward the next player over, while simultaneously punching the B button. You'll get the face-off and pass the Puck in a

blinding move sure to rock your adversary. As soon as you've passed the Puck, move the active player straight up or down—down if you've passed to the player nearest you, up if it's the player on the other side—and skate along the boards. When the goal is in sight, you have two options, both of which involve getting rid of the Puck. (If you hold onto it, you'll be in trouble: skaters have been in pursuit of you since the face-off!) Your first option is to take a shot at the goal, which, obviously, you should do if it's clear. However, if the Goalie is in position and you don't like the angle of the shot, it's a better idea to pass quickly to another player and give him the shot at the goal. Not only will this throw the Goalie off, but the second man is more likely to be in the clear, as your other player draws enemy skaters.

Since you don't want to become predictable when playing with another person, a variation for handling the face-off is to get the Puck and make the pass, then have the player cut toward you if he's on the far side, or away from you if he's on the near side. Then have him hug the boards as above. Although this takes

up to two seconds longer to execute, and is not effective against the computer—the machine will have more time to rally players around you, cutting off your clear approach to the goal—it will keep a human player off balance: a foe will never know exactly what to expect from you. Depending upon the computer team you're playing, some videopuck fans find that a loop is an effective way of cutting across the ice in the latter situation: that is, winning the face-off, passing up and down, then having that player cut across the ice by swinging back toward your own goal, using your own men as "blockers." The neat thing about this move is that with many computer teams, your guy will drag their players behind him, like a Pied Piper, making it easier to pass.

If you happen to lose the face-off to the computer, don't willy-nilly chase the skater with the Puck. Get between your goal and whoever has the Puck. If you're adept at stealing, move on your foe. If not, watch for the pass. Be forewarned, though, that the computer doesn't surrender the Puck easily to steals in the

later level, so rely more on picking off passes and blocking shots.

Assuming you don't score right from the face-off—and you won't, much of the time—you'll almost always be hounded by enemy players. If they're swarming around you near your goal, and you can't pass, take the Puck behind the goal and slow things down, get your bearings. If they're all over you on your opponent's side of the rink, pass as little as possible; the chances of the Puck getting picked off are great. Better to hold onto it, skating one man around until he has a shot at the goal. It's also a good idea to assume you're going to miss, and to immediately move in to recover the Puck. Your strategy must be to *hammer* your foe, especially the always-alert computer. If you have the Puck and you're confused at any given point against the computer, just *keep moving* while you figure out what to do next: slow down, and you're the one who's going to get hammered.

Fights are also an important part of the game, and if you can bring one on, so much the better. Don't worry about defending yourself in a fight (the A button).

As soon as a fight is inevitable, begin jabbing the B button. If you keep it going, rapid fire, you're going to win—even against the hotshot computer. After a triumphant fight, push the controller forward and hold it there. When the action starts up again, you'll take off down the ice like a rocket.

Lastly, if you're up by two while playing the computer, and want to win, let the computer score. Then take the Puck behind your goal: the computer won't come after you there, and you can run out clock.

Rating: A splendid game on almost every level.

Challenge: A (you'll really get your money's worth battling the computer)

Graphics: B+ (the only drawback: with so much going on, it's not always easy to spot the flashing—active—player right away. The fraction-of-a-second delay can hurt.)

Sound: B+

Simulation: B+ (the skating and passing action is extremely realistic)

Cross References: See separate entry on *Ice Hockey*. If you like cold-weather sports, also have a look at *Winter Games*.

California Games

Type: Sundry surf and sand sports.

Manufacturer: Epyx.

Objective: The six different games and their objectives are:

Half Pipe Skateboarding: perform tricks on a deep, U-shaped ramp

Foot Bag: keep a sack in the air with fancy foot-, head-, and kneework

Surfing: stay on your board and execute fancy maneuvers

Rollerskating: scoot along the boardwalk, avoiding obstacles

BMX Bike Racing: pedal through a course fraught with pitfalls

Flying Disk: flip a "Frisbee" to another player

Layout: The game consists of side views of every contest. Objects on many courses change from round to round (see *Obstacles*).

Hero: You have abilities unique to each contest, which are explained in the game.

Obstacles:

Half Pipe Skateboarding: None. The only hazard is falling off the board.

Foot Bag: None. The sea gull won't bother you.

Surfing: There are waves that crash from above and behind, as well as a pesky shark.

Rollerskating: The boardwalk is littered with obstacles such as cracks in the walkway and banana peels. These are in the same place from game to game. Only the location of the bouncing ball changes.

BMX Bike Racing: There's debris all over the course, from tree stumps to tires to boulders. You must maneuver around these, or you'll take a nasty spill.

Flying Disk: None, save for too little or too much power to your throw.

Menu: You can compete in some or all of the games, playing against others in succession for top score. You can also play

warm-up matches on any game(s) of your choice. The score of the player who did best in any given match is recorded on a High Scores screen.

Scoring: These are explained in detail in the instruction booklet, except for this about Foot Bag: you get 1000 points for hitting the sea gull.

Strategy:

Half Pipe Skateboarding: The biggest problem you're going to have with this game is mastering the controller. The best way to learn the ins and outs are to practice the following moves.

1. *When you descend for the first time, press right on the controller, just to get the feel of a kick turn. On the way down from the opposite side of the ramp, press left to execute a second turn. Continue doing this until you're comfortable with the maneuver.*

2. *Practice going down the ramps just pressing up and down on the controller. This will accustom you to the speeds your Skateboard can achieve.*

When you feel comfortable with these moves, you'll be able to move on to the

more complicated moves outlined in the instruction booklet.

Foot Bag: Try to stay in the center of the screen. If you kick it off the side, you'll lose time as it's tossed back in and you go chasing it. (Having said that, you get mucho points and a very nice compliment if you catch it . . . but that's more a matter of luck than skill.) To this end, don't execute repeated head hits when you're near the sides. The bag is sure to go off the screen. As for beaning the bird, the feathered target appears five times during each time period. You can hit it easily with a kick from anywhere but the head. When the bird flies in from the right, it's best to set the bag between your feet and kick up just as the bird passes.

Surfing: As with Half Pipe Skateboarding, the tough part is feeling comfortable on the board. To this end, the best training possible is this: when the game starts, hit the A button and press left on the controller. You'll level out, heading right, on the bottom of the screen (on or below the white line of foam). You can't stay there for long,

since a wave will sneak up from behind and catch you. So, deftly punch the controller to the left while jabbing the A button, to climb higher and move faster. Then do A/right to descend, and repeat. This basic up-and-down S pattern is the key to mastering the game.

Rollerskating: The most important factors in this game are watching out for hidden steps and mastering the jump. About the steps: often your skater will go down a step, clearly visible because of the angle from which you're viewing the walkway. However, the step up, seen from behind, often blends in with the other markings. Trip over it and you're going to scrape the flesh from your whole bod. As for the jumps, the slower you're going, the earlier you must release the B button to make the leap. On the other hand, if you're going *too* slowly, you won't have the momentum to clear some of the larger jumps. So: concentrate on speed in this game, and on leaping objects instead of trying to maneuver around them.

BMX Bike Racing: Objects always appear in the same order in this game, albeit in slightly different locations. A

few general rules. For beginners, build up your skills by maneuvering around objects instead of jumping them. You won't get points, but you'll learn how to work your bike for those tight spots when jumping alone won't do. Accordingly, stay in the middle of the course so you'll be prepared to swerve around obstacles. And as much as possible, pass objects on the *bottom* (right side) of the course. The top (left side) is misleading: it's easy to hit the curb and take a spill even when you think there's room to maneuver. The view is clearer closer to you, on the bottom. Another constant: whenever the road forks, the left side is less dangerous. Don't attempt stunts until you've gone through the course a few times and know the layout. Doing a flip while coming down a hill where there's always a tire around the base is a poor idea at best.

Flying Disk: This one doesn't take much skill at all, though you should be aware of the following: cocking to the red and releasing in the red will drop the disk at your feet; so will the same action in the outer yellow zones. Stay-

ing within the inner yellow zones will cause the disk to fall short. Other combinations that won't work are green to red (too short), and green to outer yellow (ditto). However, going to green for speed and releasing in the inner yellow for angle will work fine.

Rating: Each of the games has its own individual challenges, and though Roller-skating and BMX Bike Racing are annoyingly similar, the cartridge as a whole is unique and satisfying.

Challenge: B- (nothing earth-shattering in this department, but all games are entertaining)

Graphics: B- (so-so cartoon-style animation, of which Half Pipe Skateboarding is the best—especially when the board hits the fallen kid)

Sound: C (nothing inspired in this department either)

Simulation: A-

Cross References: The skateboarding and surfing segments aren't as challenging as those in *Town and Country Wood and Water Rage* and *Skate or Die*. On the other hand, the controls are easier to master and, ultimately, you'll probably

have more fun with *California Games*.
See *How to Win at Nintendo Games #2*
for *Town and Country Wood and Water*
Rage.

Double Dribble

Type: Team basketball.

Manufacturer: Konami.

Objective: Outdribble and outscore your opponent in full-court action.

Layout: The court scrolls horizontally as the players move the ball from basket to basket.

Hero: You control a team of five players—one hoopster at a time, natch!—each of whom can dribble, pass, steal, and shoot, from jumpshots to lay-ups to slam dunks. Each of the teams has a particular talent: New York is fast and accurate, deadly with the three pointers; Chicago is aggressive and hits well from the corners; Los Angeles works like a well-oiled machine, excellent with passing and hustling; and Boston is murder on offense,

particularly when it comes to jumpshots. None of the teams has an effective shooter beyond the midcourt line, so don't even try to make like Jerry West.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: Players can battle each other or the computer (the computer always takes Boston). You can also choose from three different levels of difficulty.

Scoring: Your players can make three pointers and two pointers. Fouls and violations will cost you the ball, or will allow the other team to take penalty shots.

Strategy: There's an excellent way to get the jump ball almost every time: the computer—and most human opponents—will jump up at once to get it. If you leap an instant *after* they do, you'll almost always get the ball. When you do get the ball, make for the nearest X marker and take a shot. You'll usually hit from these spots. If you're going for a three-point shot, release the ball on the way down. You'll get more distance that way. (Note: make sure you come down outside the three-point line. Balls released inside the line count as two points.)

If you're a more adventuresome player and want to go for a lay-up, here's what

you can expect. Shooting near the basket will result in a two-handed dunk. Jumping and shooting will produce a more dramatic one-handed dunk. And positioning yourself beneath the basket will allow you to execute a flashy back dunk. There's no real strategic difference between any of these, except that you get to see different close-up graphics. What's important is that you *listen* while executing the maneuver. If you hear a clang, it means you failed to get the bucket. Be prepared to move in for the rebound the instant the large-screen view returns.

One of the most important skills to master in *Double Dribble* is passing. Some players prefer to finesse the ball, moving it to the basket slowly. That's okay . . . but an occasional "rocket" pass is a good idea too. When you get the ball, press the A button down and keep it down, simultaneously pressing the controller so it's pointed toward the basket. The ball will shoot across the court, and there's virtually nothing even the computer can do to stop it. Other offensive tips: if you've got a lead of four or more points, try to eat up the clock by holding the ball or passing (to a spot where there are no

opposing players, of course). Also, don't dally after you or your opponent have taken free throws. Go for the rebound.

On defense, when the ball is on your opponent's side of the court, it's not a particularly polished tack, but it's effective: keep your fingers dancing fast on both the A and B buttons. The combination guarantees that the player who is closest to the ball will be both eligible *and* able to steal it. Be careful, though, to release the B button the instant you have possession of the ball. Otherwise, your ballhandler will automatically pass it, not always in the direction you want, and not necessarily to one of his teammates!

When your adversary crosses mid-court to your side, stop the A-B button dance and crowd him *away* from one of the X markers. Move your man out from under the basket if need be; your strategy should be to prevent your opponent from passing or dribbling. Force him to shoot from a bad spot on the court—too far, awkward angle, etc. As soon as he does, rush in for the rebound. Fewer than twenty-five percent of these shots made under pressure result in a score, so you'd be wise to keep the pressure on!

Finally, when the opposing team in-bounds the ball, keep an eye on whoever's flashing. That's the player who'll be receiving, so be prepared to dart over and steal the ball. Likewise, when you bring the ball in, switch flashing players several times quickly, or simply switch them at the last second, to keep your foe from stealing the ball from you!

When you're playing the computer at one of the advanced levels, be particularly alert to steals. The computer is excellent at these, and will blow you off the court unless you *keep the ball moving*. Pass to whoever is open, and take the best shot you can when you can, even if you're not on an X marker.

Finally, here's a terrific tip that has no bearing on the game, really, but is an awful lot of fun to execute and watch.

Select Chicago, and when you have the ball go to the foul line. Pause the game, press A, B, A, B, unpause, then pause again *very* quickly. Press the same sequence, unpause, and do this all one more time. Then, either execute a fast dunk or take a quick shot. When you do, the backboard will shatter!

Rating: A great game in every way. Players'

on-screen response is only slightly less precise than in the great soccer game *Goal!*, which is *Double Dribble*'s rival for best team sports cartridge.

Challenge: A

Graphics: A (the closeups of the lay-ups are still dazzling after months of play)

Sound: A+ (even the squeaking of the sneakers is here!)

Simulation: A

Cross References: See also the entries on *Hoops* and *Jordan vs. Bird: One on One*. Also available is *All-Pro Basketball*, a half-court game for one or two players, with one unique touch: you can study the computer playing alone to understand how its little mind works. The program allows you to select one of eight teams: of these, the L.A. Breakers are the best in terms of a strong defense and a balanced offense. One thing to be aware of while playing this game is that while shooting free throws, you'll actually do better if you line up the arrow ever so slightly off-center. Rim shots tend to be more successful than swishes in this game. Also, don't hesitate to goaltend, since you're not penalized for it. As for three pointers—skip 'em. They're tough.

Goal!

Type: Soccer.

Manufacturer: Jaleco.

Objective: Bring the ball to your opponent's goal and score, then defend your own goal when necessary.

Layout: Videogamers are positioned well above the field, looking down as the players scurry across.

Hero: On offense you can move your ball-handler any way you wish across the field, dribbling all the while; you can pass in any direction, then take control of whichever teammate receives the ball; you can kick straight balls, or you can hook, spin, or slice as you wish. On defense, while you can only control one

player at a time—the rest are on “automatic”—you can switch control to another teammate at will. You can also steal the ball from your adversary. Keep in mind that the players in midfield have no set positions. Thus, you can’t always kick ahead and know, for certain, that one of your people is going to be where the ball lands! Certain players and teams have specific strengths and weaknesses, which are explained in the supercomplete instruction booklet. Not surprisingly, the Soviet team is the best to use when it comes to playing the computer.

Opponents: Your opponents have the same skills that you do. The computer tends to try and steal a great deal, and is brutally good at it! It’s also terrific when it comes to executing head shots. And that’s just in the *early* rounds of competition! As the game progresses, especially in World Cup competition, the computer becomes even quicker and more aggressive at stealing.

Menu: One or two players can battle the computer or each other.

Scoring: A point is awarded each time you get the ball in the goal. Penalties are also

handed out for infractions, which are explained in the instruction booklet.

Strategy: If you're just beginning to play or, conversely, if you're in the thick of high-level competition, the most important strategy to remember is this: if the ball's in your half of the field, turn it around, haul off with a mighty kick, and *get the darn thing away from your goal!* It may seem simplistic to say that, but so many players make the mistake of trying to be Mr. Macho Soccer Player and dribble it upfield. Dribble when you're threatening your opponent's goal, not when the ball is near yours.

Another basic strategy, regardless of the level, is always having your defenders in *front* of the ball, not chasing it from behind. If you find yourself being outrun, or if a pass leaves you in a lurch, *immediately* transfer to a defender who's in position.

Apart from stealing—which is relatively easy to master—heading the ball is the most important skill to master. It seriously limits your opponent's ability to steal, and at the same time moves the ball as fast and as far as a cannonball! With the game in the one-player mode,

kick the ball to the side and switch to an offensive player there. Let him try a head shot. Then reset the game and try again, practicing this move until you've got it. It's a pain, but it's also a necessity. Here are a couple of advanced codes to get things cooking: FTXAREZC GOLGPIMB (that's i) and RAAHWHGH NOHRGWEH.

Rating: This is a spectacular cartridge, arguably the best sports game on the market.

Challenge: A (no matter how good you are, the computer is always a formidable foe)

Graphics: A- (though a few uniforms are difficult to tell apart in the heat of play, the animation—especially after a goal is scored—is dazzling)

Sound: B

Simulation: A- (passing is accurate, and players respond very realistically; only the actions of the goalkeeper are a tad unreliable, since the mesh of the goal is between you and the field, obscuring your view)

Cross References: Forget the old Nintendo game *Soccer. Goal!* is the one to get.

Golf

Type: Guess what?

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: Armed with irons, woods, a putter, and a wedge, you must work your way through eighteen holes with the fewest number of strokes.

Layout: Each hole is different from the others, though they're the same from game to game. The view is from overhead, with a closeup insert of the hole once you make it to the green.

Hero: You can select different clubs and choose the power of your swing and your stance; for example, the direction of the ball.

Obstacles: There are plenty in this game. The wind is your biggest challenge, since the direction and velocity change from swing to swing (an indicator at the top of the screen keeps you abreast of things). The remainder of your problems stem from the landscape: water hazards (your ball is returned to the shore if you land in one; it does *not* go back to where you teed off), the roll of the green (it will affect your putt), "OB" (out of bounds, which is where you go if you hit the ball off the screen or into the Woods), and bunkers (sand traps).

Menu: There are one- and two-player games. Sadly, there's no way to access later holes other than to play through the course. This is unfortunate, since the latter, more difficult holes are where you need practice!

Scoring: Each swing is counted as a stroke; landing OB will also cost you a stroke.

Strategy: While the wind will affect the courses differently, the following clubs will usually get you onto the green. Keep in mind that the "super shot" referred to in the instruction booklet is *not* to be counted upon. Luck, more than skill, is required to hit it. As for the SW (sand

wedge), *always* swing it hard to get out of a bunker. A soft shot will usually leave you in the sand. It's also a good idea to go to the putter when you're near the green, not just when you're on it. That way, you're sure not to overshoot the green, landing on the other side and wasting a stroke.

Hole by hole, here's how to arm yourself. Unless otherwise noted, take a full backswing.

One: 1W followed by a halfswing 4W

Two: 1W and then a halfswing with 3W

Three: 2W, then 1W. If you go OB on the 2W swing, hit the next shot with 7I, followed by the 1W.

Four: 1W, then a $\frac{3}{4}$ 1W

Five: 2 1W shots, going around the water. Change your stance so you're facing approximately 11:00 if the wind is to the east.

Six: 1W to the Island on the left, then halfswing 1W to get to the top Island.

Seven: 1W, then $\frac{1}{2}$ 1W to cross the water

Eight: 1W, then 4I. You can try for the open area in the Woods to the left if you wish; if you make it there, it'll save you a stroke.

Nine: $\frac{3}{4}$ 1W, followed by a full 9I

Ten: 1W, then 1W

Eleven: $\frac{4}{5}$ 1W, then $\frac{1}{3}$ 9I

Twelve: 1W straight ahead, then $\frac{3}{4}$ 1W to the east, followed by a 9I to get to the green

Thirteen: 3W to the island on the right, 1W to the island on top, then 3W to the green

Fourteen: 1I to clear the Woods, then 1I to the green.

Fifteen: 1W to the Island above, on the left, then 1W to the green.

Sixteen: Cross from right to left (east to west) with 1W, then use 1W again to reach the green

Seventeen: $\frac{1}{2}$ 1W to the west, then 1W to the top

Eighteen: 1I to the east, then 1W up (north)

Rating: A thoroughly enjoyable game, even for nongolfers.

Challenge: B+ (the wind makes the game different every time, and the clubs all perform differently, as they would in real life)

Graphics: B (little animation, but excellent detail on the course)

Sound: C (nothing imaginative going on

here—like the cries of other golfers, or a “fore” or two—though there’s always the rewarding “Beep, beep, beep” when you make par!)

Simulation: A— (about as close as you can get to the real thing)

Cross References: There are two other golf games on the market. First, there’s the worthwhile *Lee Trevino’s Fighting Golf*, covered elsewhere in this book. Another golf game, *Bandai Golf*, is the weakest of the three. On the plus side, the controls operate the same as in *Golf*, giving you a great deal of control, and you can select the club you want. The game generously makes recommendations. But the graphics aren’t as detailed as the other games, and the white marker used to aim your shots is a bother rather than a help. Also, when you tee off, it’s very easy to send the ball flying in the wrong direction—vertically instead of horizontally, as if it were going into orbit—by taking too weak a swing. Make sure you hit the A button when it’s dead on the black line.

Hoops

Type: Half-court one-on-one or two-on-two basketball.

Manufacturer: Jaleco.

Objective: Gain possession of the ball and dribble, pass, shoot, and slam dunk your way to victory.

Layout: The game consists of half-court play, switching to a closeup view whenever a player attempts a slam dunk.

Hero: There are eight players to choose from, each of which has strengths and weaknesses as described in the instruction booklet. As a footnote to the descriptions in the booklet, be aware that Bomber is especially lethal taking jumpshots from the corners, while Legs's

stealing ability works best when it comes to nabbing passes.

Opponents: The computer or your opponent can select whoever you don't, and usually chooses someone whose abilities undercut those of the player you picked. That is, if you go for a tall player, the computer will usually select a short, fast one.

Menu: One player battles the computer in one-on-one or two-on-two modes; two players can battle the computer; or two players can battle each other. You can also decide whether you want the loser or the winner to take the ball out. There are two game options: regular half-court play, or "Around the World," in which you must make baskets from predetermined spots around the key.

Scoring: You earn one point for each basket, and play to 10, 15, 20, or 25 points.

Strategy: Forget common basketball wisdom that says the taller players have the advantage! In *Hoops* always go for the quick, short, scrappy players first (such as Wiz and Legs). Although these players will usually lose on offense or defense in a slam-dunk situation—the big guys can actually stuff them from be-

hind, giving the titans a defensive edge—the little dudes are so aggressive they rarely *get* into that situation. When building a team, always go for players that complement one another, such as diminutive and tough with tall and a good outside shooter. Some good team-ups are Barbie and Mr. Doc, Jammer and Zap, and Face and Bomber.

One of the qualities that makes *Hoops* relatively easy to master and play is that inside shots are no more or less likely to go in than outside shots. Thus, as soon as you get the ball and the basket's in view, take a shot! In a two-player situation, don't haggle about who gets the ball. That gives the opponent—especially the computer—time to crowd you and steal. The best rebounder should get under the net at once, while the other player should set up and take the shot she/he handles best.

One thing to watch out for with the computer, by the way: it likes to foul you when you've got a sure-thing basket. Since players can't foul out, make sure you stay on the move, keeping away from the underhanded NES.

The instruction booklet offers several

tips about the jump pass and order of team selection, all of which are excellent. And here are some handy codes: during a game of two players vs. the computer, use LXRPVZXLY. For one player vs. the computer, input IUOOMWQIM.

Rating: Fun for two players, but nothing to write home about compared to *Double Dribble*.

Challenge: B (the variety of players keeps the game from getting redundant, and the fact that there are penalties is excellent, since it forces you to play with finesse rather than brute strength)

Graphics: D (the screen gets muddy when the figures are together, and the animation is just so-so. The closeup of the slam dunk isn't as cool as it should be.)

Sound: C

Simulation: C-

Cross References: More and more basketball games keep entering the market. The reason, one assumes, is that the software makers are still trying to get it right, program one game that has everything. In addition to *Hoops*, there are *Double*

Dribble and *Jordan vs. Bird: One on One*, which are covered elsewhere in this book, as well as *Fast Break* and *All-Pro Basketball*. Neither of the last two has anything dramatically new to offer, and *Hoops*, alas, is not the one game to have if you're shopping for a basketball cartridge.

Ice Hockey

Type: Rink action between teams.

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: Moving your players along the ice and knocking the Puck into the Goal.

Layout: Your vantage point is from above, and the rink scrolls from side to side as the players skate.

Hero: A team of four, including a goal-keeper, is assembled from three different kinds of players: Thin, Ordinary, and Stocky. Thin is quick and weak; Ordinary is medium-fast and medium-strong; and Stocky is slow but powerful. Players can skate, pass, fake, and body check; you can mix-and-match 'em however you wish.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: It's one player against the computer, or two players against each other. You can set the length of each period, and also choose the speed of play, which affects everything from the speed of the players to the velocity of the Puck. (Be advised that the computer benefits *greatly* from the faster setting.)

Scoring: You earn a point for each goal, and are punished with time in the penalty box for various infractions, which are explained in the instruction booklet.

Strategy: After playing with all kinds of combinations, you're going to come to this conclusion: load the rink with bruisers. Three Stocky players and a Thin won't give you balance, but it'll give you power with a dash of speed—just what you need to win the game. Stocky players virtually guarantee that no one's going to be stealing the Puck from you . . . unless they loaded up on Stockys too, in which case you'll be doing a good deal of passing! With a team of mostly Stockys, all you need to do is work the Puck to the goal and take your shots. With the big guy's power behind them, your percentage of scores should be high.

If you're playing the computer, especially at the lower speeds, pass as much as possible when you're near your opponent's Goal. The computer goes after the Puck like Tom after Jerry, and the only way you're going to get a clear shot at the Goal is by luring the computer players over, flipping the Puck quickly to another player, and taking your shot immediately. Or passing back and taking the shot then. If you find yourself hounded or surrounded, bounce the Puck against the boards to pass: ricochet shots can be a vital part of your repertoire, a great way to slip the Puck around an adversary. They're also a great way to score against a human opponent, since she/he won't be expecting you to take a bank shot at the Goal!

Zigzagging is an excellent way to get across the ice if you're starting from your own territory; a straight run is going to draw other players like moths to a flame. If you're playing against another person, it's also advisable to hit the brakes now and then and change direction, so that your adversary doesn't start anticipating your moves. And it's a good idea to use the area in back of the cage to rest and

slow down a too-quick game. Changing the pace also tends to throw human players off, especially because they don't know from which direction you're going to be coming out, or exactly when. Try to make Thin the player who goes back there: if an enemy comes in after you, leave in the other direction, and there's no way they can catch you! (You can also go behind the cage, pivot, and leave suddenly the way you came, befuddling an opponent who expected you to rest a spell!)

A good player shouldn't be afraid to bring the goalie out of the cage for a power play, but use this tack *very* sparingly, for obvious reasons. Also be careful when your goalie passes: the computer, in particular, is very good at picking these passes off! (By the same token, be alert enough to snatch passes made by your opponent's goalie.)

While we're on the subject of goalies, for the adventuresome among you, one of the fun ways to play *Ice Hockey* is to get rid of the goalies altogether. Do this during the title screen by holding down the A and B buttons simultaneously on

both controllers, then hitting Start on controller one.

Another amusing way to play the game is as follows. During the select screen, hold down A and B on *both* controllers and press start. During the game, when you hit the Puck, hold down B. The Puck will move superfast and keep on moving!

Rating: This is another of those "older" cartridges which has been unfairly overlooked due to the flashier *Blades of Steel* and other dazzling sports games.

Challenge: A (at top speed, the computer will keep you moving)

Graphics: B+ (cartoony, but the personalities of the skaters come through, and the animation is excellent)

Sound: B (good game and crowd noises, with appropriate music)

Simulation: B+ (even though there are fewer skaters on the ice than in regulation hockey, the game has the feel of a real contest)

Cross References: *Blades of Steel* is the other big hockey game . . . very different from *Ice Hockey*, though both "paks"—who came up with that dopy spelling, anyway?—are worth having in your game library.

John Elway's Quarterback

Type: Football.

Manufacturer: Tradewest.

Objective: Scoring against a computer-controlled team.

Layout: The view's from above as you march your weekend warriors down the field. Only pre-programmed formations can be used at the line of scrimmage.

Hero: After selecting one of fourteen teams, the offensive player controls the quarterback; in a two-player mode, the second player, on defense, works the middle linebacker. The A button allows the defender to make a diving tackle or, when

your player is stationary, to leap and (hopefully) intercept a pass. There are nine players on each team, and nine plays the offense can run along either side of the field. Defense also has nine plays to choose from. After seeing how the defense has lined up, the offense has the option of changing whatever play was called in the huddle. There are no handoffs. The biggest limitation your quarterback has is the inability to control the distance of passes.

Opponents: Since each player takes a turn at offense and defense, this is inapplicable.

Menu: One- or two-player modes (see *Hero*).

Scoring: As in real football, you play for points while the clock ticks down.

Strategy: Since you have little control over the passes, and it takes no more effort to hurl a bomb than it does to pass a few yards, go for the long ball when you take to the air. Since passes carry the danger of interception—which are easy to execute in this cartridge—most home Elways rely on passes only in long-yard situations. Since that's what your opponent will expect, mix the plays up: start with a bomb or two, then run a few plays on the ground. On the next set of downs,

change tactics entirely. Remember: this isn't real football, and standard rules don't apply. When it comes time to hurl the bomb, use the shotgun pattern: it gives you time to set up.

On running plays execute zigzag patterns once you have the ball. Vary these tight and wide. They're the best way to avoid the defense's deadly diving tackles. After running just a few plays, you'll begin to recognize when a defender is going to catch you, despite your best efforts. When that happens, jump forward to wring a few extra yards from the play.

On defense don't shadow a zigzagging player, but run straight ahead. You'll cover more ground. If you get out-zigzagged, or are caught out of position on defense, make sure you hit the B button to switch control to the defender nearest the player with the ball. If you think a pass is imminent, don't rush in for the tackle. Hang back and be ready to go for an interception. If you're wrong and the ball stays on the ground, go to the B button to switch defenders to someone near the ball.

Lastly, what would any football game be without the hint of fishy doings be-

hind the scenes? In *John Elway's Quarterback* those "fishy doings" are out-and-out cheating. When you're on offense in the play-select mode, move the cursor to the Normal/Reverse window. Leave the cursor there until time runs out. Doing this will turn your wide receivers and the quarterback into super O.J. Simpsons. To score an easy six points, simply take the snap, immediately hit the B button, head to the sidelines, and scurry straight up the field. Not even the Flash could catch you.

However, defense is not quite helpless in the questionable-play department either. On the kickoff, simultaneously press the control pad up and rapidly jab the B button. Your men will form a wedge which will allow you to tackle the ball carrier within a yard or two of the ten-yard line.

It wouldn't hurt to spend time before you play the game studying the defensive formations displayed on the screen. When you're on offense, you'll need to recognize defensive alignments at a glance and possibly adjust the play accordingly.

Rating: The best thing about this game is that you can lend it to a friend and not get too upset if it doesn't come back.

Challenge: C- (the limited pass control and meager number of plays make the game predictable)

Graphics: B- (the figures look a little Play-Doughy, but the animation is good)

Sound: B

Simulation: C- (see *Challenge* for reasons)

Cross References: There are inferior games on the market such as *10 Yard Fight* and *Play Action Football*, but there are also better games, most notably *Tecmo Bowl* (see separate entry) and *NFL Football*. (In fairness to *Play Action Football*, though, it *does* have the best variety of them all: you can battle the computer at four different skill levels; you can play another person; you and another person can battle the computer; or you and another person can play two other people.)

Jordan vs. Bird: One on One

Type: Various forms of basketball competition, *except* for full-court team play.

Manufacturer: Milton Bradley.

Objective: Score as many baskets as possible in the various scoring contests; score *and* demonstrate good form in the Slam/Dunk competition.

Layout: There's just one view: half-court, seen from midcourt.

Hero: You can be one of two NBA stars: Michael Jordan, aka the Slammer, or Larry Bird, aka the Shooter. Bird is the superior scorer, especially when it comes to jumpshots, while Jordan is faster and

better at both stealing and rebounding. All in all, you'll do better with Jordan than with Bird. (Unless you live in Boston and have a psychological impasse to playing against Bird.)

Opponents: The computer or another player takes the part of whichever hoop hero you don't select.

Menu: *Jordan vs. Bird* offers three basic games: One on One, the Slam/Dunk Contest, and the 3-Point Contest. There are several variations of each, all of them explained in the instruction booklet.

Scoring: You get points for scoring baskets. In the Slam/Dunk competition, judges grade you on your form. Note: the Slam/Dunk is the toughest place to beat the computer.

Strategy: After you've had some experience with the two players, you'll conclude that both men are great when it comes to three pointers from the far left or right, just beyond the three-point line. As a result, you could do a lot worse than getting the ball, heading there, and going for that shot, especially if you're playing the computer. (A human player is going to catch on to your strategy, stay tight against you, and try to block your shot.

The computer will cut you a little more slack . . . to its detriment!)

When you're Jordan playing defense on Bird, give him some room—even on the three pointers. A good rule of thumb is to stand back from him slightly *less* than half the distance between Bird and the basket. Jump when he does, which will usually throw his aim off slightly, resulting in a shot that bounces off the rim. If you're playing defense against Jordan, plant yourself under the boards and jump continuously. You'll look like you're on a pogo stick, but so what? You'll keep Jordan off balance and, since Bird is an ace rebounder, the ball will be yours.

A good defensive tactic if a player moves in on the basket is to stay close in front of him and back him into a corner. He won't be able to escape or get off an effective shot. Moreover, if you can pin him *and* steal the ball, so much the better. You'll be able to turn and have an unimpeded shot at the basket.

Bird is pretty much on-target wherever he's shooting from, so aiming isn't a problem. Jordan, however, tends to skew a little to the right. Thus, for example, if

you're at the top of the key, take a step to the left before you fire at the basket. The next sound you hear will be the swoosh of the ball dropping neatly through the net! It's a good idea to get the feel of being Michael Jordan by playing the 3-Point Warm-up. That option will let you experience his shooting weaknesses before you go up against Bird in One on One.

Alas, there *are* no shortcuts in the Slam/Dunk competition. You simply have to practice the moves.

Rating: This cartridge is great at parties: flubbing the slam dunks or getting massacred in One on One can be a lot of fun (if you're an observer—not if you're the blundering amateur getting mopped up on the court).

Challenge: B+ (even after you master the skills, the cartridge offers enough variety to keep things interesting)

Graphics: B (the animation of the players is fine, but a change of scenery—say, an overhead view for the Slam-Dunk or 3-Point competition—would have been nice)

Sound: B

Simulation: B+ (you may not have the fingertip control of the ball as you would in real life, but the feel of the jumpshots and the need for precise trajectories are very realistic)

Cross References: There are numerous other basketball games, many of which are covered in this book.

Kings of the Beach

Type: Oceanfront volleyball with two-person teams.

Manufacturer: Ultra Games.

Objective: To pass and spike until your opponents are defeated.

Layout: There's a slight amount of horizontal scroll on the sandy court as the players hit the ball back and forth.

Hero: Your volleyballers have the ability to dish up a variety of serves and saves, each of which is explained in the instruction booklet. (On spikes, note that the higher the ball is when you hit it, the sharper the angle of descent. The sharper the angle, the tougher the ball is to return.) In the one-player mode, your

computer teammate is especially good at blocks. He does, however, have one very pronounced weakness. If he's at the net—near the center or beyond—and you're on the near side of the court, also at the net, *don't* pass the ball to him. He'll attempt a spike, and nine out of ten times he'll miss it. Make sure you're standing a few steps back from the net to pass. Each player on every team has his own strengths and weaknesses, which are described in the instruction booklet. Players also have the ability to argue a call with the referee. Nearly half the time the call will be reversed. (Note: your computer-controlled teammate often runs over to dispute calls. When he does, there's nothing you can do but stand there and hope for the best.)

Opponents: Same as above, though the computer-controlled team doesn't have a problem with the abovementioned lateral pass.

Menu: One player and a computer-controlled teammate can battle a fully computer-controlled team; two human teammates can battle a computer-controlled team; or, with an adaptor, up

to four human players can battle for supremacy.

Scoring: You earn a point for each score made while you're serving. Score while your opponent is serving, and you simply get the serve. You can earn an extra point for your opponents by arguing with the referee and really ticking him off.

Strategy: Whether you're playing with or against people or the computer, this is a must: don't have both players on the net. Apart from the problem mentioned in *Hero*, above, you'll leave yourself open in the backcourt. Besides, if your two players are superimposed, or nearly so, it won't be clear who hit the ball . . . and who's supposed to hit it next. There's nothing more frustrating in this game than for the two of you to be standing there watching as the ball drops between you.

On the serve, the best to use is a jump serve; they're fast and low, and tough for both human and computer opponents to return. A flat serve is nearly as good, though not quite as fast. Let the jump serve rip, then run to the net. If the ball is returned, don't pass it to your teammate, but spike it yourself. The one-two

punch of a jump serve and sudden spike fazes even computer players, frequently left out of position by the serve. If you opt for the third kind of serve, the underhand serve, position yourself in either of the far corners. The ball will land along the sideline, forcing one of your opponents to rush there. That leaves one man to cover the rest of the court, giving you a wider range of places to spike it.

If you do spike at any point during the game, particularly against a tough team, remain at the net. They may block the shot; if they do, be prepared to dart back a step or two and recover the sharply spiked ball. Note that while your computer teammate is excellent at blocking, he always hits it back straight to the opposing player. You, on the other hand, can spike it to the side. Thus, it's better if you take these shots.

Against the computer one of the best tactics is to spike on one side, then the other. In the early going the computer usually doesn't rush to get into position. The best place to spike is the net support opposite the side where your teammate is standing. When he passes to you, spike it right down in the corner, where it's

very difficult to get. This position is especially effective if you dash over after a volley on the other side; the computer players don't automatically follow you across the court. (If a player does come over, no problem: angle your spike around him.) Another good move is to position yourself in the backcourt and let your computer teammate take the ball when it's returned. He'll feed it to you, then you'll return it to him. Because you're feeding it from the backcourt, your computer teammate is going to use the ball's momentum to wham it over the net at an angle that is very difficult to handle.

One malady that you can inflict upon several of the computer-controlled teams is *confusion*. Induce this when your teammate serves by running around on the court. You'll look like a lunatic, but who cares if your opponent botches the serve return? This works particularly well against Calvin and Wilfred.

Beware, though: the computer doesn't exactly play fair. If you hit a killer shot, the computer players go into the dig and dive mode the *instant* the ball leaves your hand. There's some microprocessor

collusion going on here, and it leaves you at a slight disadvantage since your paltry human reflexes can't hope to match the computer's reaction time. (Even though your dig and dive move is automatic, it doesn't kick in until you move toward a shot.)

To give you a leg up on tournament competition, input the following code: SIDEOUT-. You will begin the race to the throne with three victories already under your belt. The password GEKKO—will start you off with six wins behind you. The code TOPFLITE starts you with nine teams trashed in your wake.

Rating: A romp with friends, and a real sweaty-palms contest against the computer.

Challenge: B+

Graphics: B (the animation is brilliant. The only problem with the graphics is occasional difficulty seeing the ball in perspective. If a player on the near side of the court hits the ball over the net, it's not always immediately clear whether the ball is on the near side or has slanted toward the far side (where the referee is sitting).

Sound: B+ (you can turn off the horrible music, leaving only the very good sound effects)

Simulation: B+ (the only negative is that dives are automatic; if you could control them, the simulation would be perfect)

Cross References: A similar but less satisfying cartridge is the old *Volleyball* cartridge from Nintendo, which also features international teams and different levels of play. *Super Dodge Ball* will also please fans of *Kings of the Beach*. See separate entry.

Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf

Type: Two-fisted, nine-hole golf.

Manufacturer: SNK.

Objective: After selecting your course, you must knock the golf ball into the cup, using the fewest number of strokes.

Layout: Each fairway is shown from overhead, complete with obstacles. When you golf, the view is from behind the golfer; when the ball goes flying, the view remains ground level, shifting to where the ball is about to land, allowing you to watch its approach. When you reach the green, the view is overhead, hashmarks showing the slope of the ground. There

are two different courses to choose from: Japan, with its profusion of water, and the verdant U.S.

Hero: Each player has a full complement of clubs from which to choose; the computer makes its own recommendations, which are correct approximately seventy-five percent of the time. (It tends to over-recommend irons. Switch them for woods, unless you're in a bad rough, strong headwind, or bunker. In the rough, avoid woods at all costs and go with a 5-iron. In a strong wind, a 9-iron is best. If you end up in a bunker, trade the irons for the sand wedge . . . though irons will work if you're near the edge of a bunker.) The clubs can be swung as hard or soft as the golfer wishes, and the player can also change the direction she or he is facing. Rather unjustly, the computer forces you to "Give Up" if you take too many shots on some holes. If videogamers wanted Big Brother watching over us, they'd be reading Orwell instead of playing *Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf*!

Four players are available to videogamers. Super Mex and Pretty Amy are very good all-around players; Big Jumbo packs a powerful swing, especially with

the irons; and Miracle Chosuke is best on the green.

Obstacles: There are different kinds of foliage traps known as roughs (light, deep, and super), trees, water, sand traps aka bunkers (from regular to hard), and wind that constantly shifts direction and intensity. (The wind not only changes from shot to shot, but it's different from game to game.)

Menu: One to four players can enjoy the game. Solo players can golf alone or compete against a very proficient computer golfer.

Scoring: Each time you swing your club, it counts as a stroke. Landing in water or out of bounds also costs you a stroke; in most cases the ball is returned to the spot from which you hit it, though occasionally a shot in the drink will be placed on a bordering shore. The fewer number of strokes you use to put the golf ball in the hole, the better.

Strategy: The best thing you can do right off the bat—right off the club?—is to go to the Nassau mode and watch what the computer does. Never mind how badly *you* do: study which clubs it picks for various shots, how it realigns itself in the

wind, how far the power bar advances in various situations, and take copious notes.

When you first begin learning the game, it's a good idea to limit yourself to just a few clubs and to learn everything about them. Recommended are the 1-wood, which is great for distance; the sand wedge, for those traps and roughs; the putter; and a 6- or 8-iron for height and power.

So much of the gameplay depends upon the force and direction of the wind and the timing of your stroke, that only general strategies apply. For one, be conservative when you hit toward the fairway. Balls bounce when they land, and you don't want yours hopping from the fairway out of bounds or into the rough. Nowhere is this more dangerous than on the Japanese course, where a bad bounce will carry you into one of the abundant oceans or lakes.

Another important element of gameplay is the direction of your swing. The computer automatically puts you in a stance which is great as the crow flies. That's great if you're a crow, but as a golfer, you will often find it's better to try

and go around some hazards rather than over them.

Rating: Golfers will be able to scratch their golf itch with the game, while nongolfers will get a highly enjoyable taste of what the game's about.

Challenge: A (beating the computer player is—you'll pardon the pun—rough)

Graphics: A+ (the scenery and the animation of the golfers and ball are first rate)

Sound: B+ (properly jaunty music, and fine sound effects)

Simulation: B+ (the wind tends to overaffect the ball, but otherwise the game is extremely satisfying; the ball plays with incredible realism on the different surfaces of the various greens)

Cross References: See separate entry on *Golf*.

Major League Baseball

Type: The title says it all.

Manufacturer: LJN Toys.

Objective: Hammer more balls out of the park than your competitor.

Layout: Your vantage point is from behind and above the batter, looking out toward the field. The first-, second-, and third-base runners are all visible. When the ball is hit, the screen transforms into a view that's high overhead, scrolling toward the outfield as the ball travels.

Hero: Players build teams, selecting from the rosters of actual major league franchises. Talents of the video players ac-

curately reflect the abilities of their real-life counterparts. On the mound the pitcher has a lot of latitude as to what kind of pitch he wants to throw... though the choice is somewhat negated by the fact that the batters hit nearly everything that passes by. Fielders can catch and throw balls, and tag out runners.

Be advised that the computer always picks the same players for its teams. Take a clue from this: note which players the computer chooses, then do the same when you play either the computer or a human opponent. Each roster is the best team that can possibly be fielded!

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: One player can take to the mound against the computer, or two players can slug it out against each other.

Scoring: Cross home and you earn a run.

Strategy: There are a couple of things to remember when pitching to the computer. First: it almost never swings if you throw a ball on the first pitch. Second: it almost always swings at whatever you throw following a called strike.

Otherwise, tips on this game are limited because it's so darned *easy*! The slow

pitches are so slow you can swing twice, while the fast ones come so quickly you'll be swinging after the catcher has the ball in his mitt! The smartest thing you can do is keep the A button depressed and swing the bat like a dervish! It may not be kosher baseball . . . but then, this game isn't exactly Sunday at Shea! About the only thing you can count on when batting is this: if you move your batter all the way forward, he's more likely to get a hit than if he stands where he is. Don't know why it works, but it does, regardless of the team or the pitch.

In the field, grounders and missed flies stop suddenly, so they're relatively easy to scoop up. And that's good, since, like so many Nintendo baseball games, fielding is a pain. The outfielders run in tandem, meaning that if the center fielder runs toward right field, so does the left fielder . . . while the right fielder runs even farther to the right!

Rating: This is the worst of the baseball games for Nintendo.

Challenge: D (easy to hit and pitch)

Graphics: D (very jerky animation and, most bothersome of all, the screen goes

green for a second after each hit, destroying the flow of the game)

Sound: D

Simulation: F (those stop-on-a-dime grounders are idiotic!)

Cross References: See separate entries on *Tecmo Baseball*, *Bases Loaded*, *Baseball Stars*, *RBI Baseball*, and *Game Boy Baseball*.

Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!

Type: Boxing tournament.

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: Work your way through increasingly tougher pugilists until you face Iron Mike himself.

Layout: You see the ring from over your fighter's shoulder, staring right into the faces (and fists!) of your many foes.

Hero: You take the part of Little Mac, a small but determined fighter. You can punch or dodge to the right or left, throw uppercuts, duck, or block punches. By slamming repeatedly on the B button, you help Mac get up faster after he's

been knocked down. Landing a punch earns Mac Stars, which give his uppercuts added power. Unfortunately, Mac loses energy and Stars each time he's hit. When Mac turns red, he can only wage a defensive fight, unable to throw a punch until he marshals his strength. Mac will stay down if he's knocked to the canvas two or three times (how many times depends upon the fight and Mac's Star count). Go the distance, and the judges will decide the winner; Mac is always at a disadvantage in another fighter's hometown due to bias among the judges. A note about fighting on the World Circuit: if you dodge, push the controller in the opposite direction from your dodge and throw a punch. It'll be more powerful than usual!

Opponents: There are eleven different foes, each of whom is increasingly more powerful. Their strengths and weaknesses are as follows:

Glass Joe: Punching ability nil, falls with little effort.

Von Kaiser: Must be Glass Joe's brother: another quick canvas-kisser.

Piston Honda: Not great on defense, but

good with a variety of punches: a lethal Piston Punch, left jabs, a right hook, left and right uppercuts (squatting), and uppercuts (kneeling).

Don Flamenco: Good on defense, and with a mighty uppercut known as the Flamenco Punch. Also packs a potent right hook.

King Hippo: Okay on defense, but stronger than anyone who's come before. Most potent with straight ahead and downward blows.

Great Tiger: Very good on defense, with a dazzling Magic Punch. He's also very strong with left jabs, and left and right uppercuts (squatting).

Bald Bull: Very resilient, Bald Bull actually goes to the top of the ring and charges you, counting on jabs, an uppercut, and a right hook to bring you down.

Mr. Sandman: Tough on defense, Mr. Sandman relies a great deal on a flurry of hard, quick punches known as his Razor Uppercut. Between these, he squeezes in powerful jabs as well as left and right hooks.

Soda Popinski: Quick on defense and offense, Soda is best known for his jabs, hooks, and left and right uppercuts.

Super Macho Man: Powerful on defense, Supes is legendary for the murderous uppercut known as the Super Spin Punch.

Mike Tyson: There's nothing Mike doesn't do well—though he's kind enough to let you know a little of what he's planning to do to you. When he blinks one eye, it means a straight punch is on the way. When he blinks both eyes, watch out for a flurry of straight punches.

Menu: Your fighter faces each boxer in turn.

Scoring: As the clock ticks down—every three seconds of clock time equals one second in real time—Mac earns points by landing a punch (10 points), hitting his foe so hard he sees Stars (100 points), and sending them to the canvas (1000 points).

Strategy: Here's how to handle each of the combatants in turn.

Glass Joe: Just hit him in the jaw a few times and he's down. You don't even have to hit him in rapid succession!

Von Kaiser: This fellow has a jaw that is particularly vulnerable to uppercuts.

Don't bother with his relatively tough belly; just stick to the face, and keep on slugging so he doesn't have time to recuperate.

Piston Honda: Piston lets you know before he's about to strike: his eyebrows twitch. When you see this happen, hit him in the face with an uppercut and he'll forget all about throwing punches. If you're too slow, dodge his jab and respond with a pair of blows to the face. Also watch for his dance. He hops from front to back four times, after which he always uses an uppercut. If you hit him as soon as he steps forward, you'll not only cancel his planned punch, you may well cancel him as well!

Don Flamenco: Let this fighter throw the first punch, or he'll go into a defensive posture that will cause you to waste a blow. Worse, he'll hammer back with a powerful, fast uppercut as soon as you hit him. Let him open with an uppercut, which you'll elude by stepping to the side (usually the left). Respond with a series of left-right uppercuts of your own. Thereafter, don't let him goad you into throwing a punch, ever: he'll sidestep it

and answer with his Flamenco Punch. Lash out only when he's silent. In later rounds Don will open with jabs rather than an uppercut, then hang back and wait for your attack. Move in cautiously, ready to block or dodge.

King Hippo: The big dude is most vulnerable when he opens his maw and lifts his fist. When he does so, smash him. He'll lose his pants, and when he stoops to pull them up, fire jabs repeatedly into his navel; you can usually get in seven or eight punches. Wait until he stands again, watch for him to open his mouth and raise his fist again, and repeat.

Great Tiger: Ole Tige enters the ring, his ruby glows, and he immediately feeds you a feast of jabs. Don't be awed by these! Watch his left fist (on the right side of the screen). Whenever it's extended, he's vulnerable to an uppercut in the face. If you can work in a whack to the belly, terrific: when he bends, give him another uppercut in the kisser. The Magic Punch doesn't come until the last forty seconds of the first round, and always opens the second round. Before he unleashes one, he'll take a step back.

When he does, put all thoughts of attack from your mind and simply block the punches. There'll usually be five of them. Afterward the big cat will be so dizzy you can deck him with a flurry of left-right punches to the face.

Bald Bull: The hairless hooligan is another fighter who telegraphs his moves. When he moves his hands up and down rapidly, expect a hook. Dodge, wait until his left glove is extended, then send a right into his puss. When he replies with a right uppercut, he'll be open to a trio of fists in the face. His other "big gun," his charge, is not a problem. When he runs at you, don't get out of the way. Rather, hit him in the stomach—his most vulnerable spot—with a left when he makes his third hop. Later, on the World Circuit, the most successful punch to use on Bull is an uppercut.

Mr. Sandman: You can put the Sandman to sleep this way. Before he lets loose with his Razor Uppercut, he always pauses for a few seconds. If you're a seasoned fighter, use this time to hit him once in the face, and follow up with a flurry of blows to the body. If you're a novice, just make ready to

dodge. Also note that he always raises and lowers his hands quickly before letting go with a hook. Knowing this, you can be prepared to dodge, then sneak in a hook of your own around his extended arm.

Soda Popinski: Watch for his feet to shift rapidly back and forth. It means he's going to let loose up to three jabs. Dodge these, then hit him in the face repeatedly with a right uppercut. You'll have no trouble getting in five or six blows before the carbonated crusher goes back on the offensive.

Super Macho Man: Wait for Macho to get things cooking. Macho will either rely on quick single blows or rapid fire blows. Whichever one he opens with is *usually* the one he'll stick with for the remainder of the round. When the bout starts and he begins punching, duck to the left and hit him in the face with four quick jabs. He'll probably go into his Super Spin, at which point you must wait until his arm is on the way back (toward him), then slip in a pair of jabs. Unfortunately, there's no way of knowing how many times Macho will go to his Super Spin. It

may be once, it may be a dozen. *Be ready!*

If you simply want to get out of the way of Super Macho Man's Super Spin, wait for him to cock his arm, then dodge to right as he swings.

Mike Tyson: Your strategy against Mike should be to go the distance and win on points, rather than trying to deck him. Overall, stay away from stomach punches with Iron Mike: he's too tough for that. The most effective move with him is to go to the side to avoid his shots, then step back in and clobber him with a right uppercut. If you're feeling brave—despite the towering size of the guy—don't hesitate to throw a punch even when his fist is cocked. You can still get one in and get out of the way before he lets one fly. At the beginning of your match with Mike, he'll throw a quick flurry. Dodge left, then reply with two punches to the face. Still, it's suggested that you play conservatively with this man: rely on defense, tiring him out and getting in your licks when you can, rather than being the aggressor. As for Mike's Dynamite Punch, it's not as bad as it *could* be: if he fails to land one dur-

ing half of the first round—watch the clock!—he won't be able to throw one thereafter.

The individual strategies aside, here are some codes you'll find useful or just plain fun: 007 373 5963 brings you right to Mike Tyson without having to fight through the rest of the pugilists, while punching in 135 792 4680—note the odd/even progression—holding down Select, and—while still holding down Select—punching A and B *simultaneously*, whisks you to a round of untold daring: another World Circuit, where your first foe will be King Hippo. (If at first you can't get this code to work, *don't give up!* Try it a few times, and it'll eventually kick in.) If you're the kind of person who simply likes to play nutty tricks with your NES, punch in 800 422 2602 to get a beep. Other useful codes are 005 737 5423 (Don Flamenco), 777 807 3454 (Piston Honda), 106 113 0120 while holding select and pressing A and B (you'll get the programming credits), and 940 861 8538 (try it and see what you'll get).

Rating: An "oldie" but still a goody, one of

the best-selling Nintendo games of all time.

Challenge: A (you'll never get tired of trying to better your showing)

Graphics: B (good caricatures and animation)

Sound: B (excellent crowd and fight sounds, and nonannoying music)

Simulation: B+ (this is as close as you'll want to get to meeting some of these marauders!)

Cross References: *Ring King* isn't as good, but it's got a lot to recommend it. See separate entry.

Pro Wrestling

Type: Championship tournament, one-on-one.

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: As one of seven fighters in the Video Wrestling Association, you must defeat five other wrestlers in order to face the Great Puma.

Layout: The ring scrolls horizontally as the fighters have it out. When a man is tossed over the ropes, the screen shifts to the action outside the canvas.

Hero: The half-dozen contenders who vie for the privilege of facing the Great Puma are, in order of their appearance, Fighter Hayabusa, Starman, Kin Corn Karn, Giant Panther, the Amazon, and King Slen-

der. All of them can use the twelve "Basic Throws and Techniques" described in the instructions, while each man also has his own "Special Throws and Techniques," which are also described in the booklet. Every wrestler can move about the ring in eight directions. Various restrictions—such as time limits on being outside the ring or standing on the ropes—are described in the instructions.

Opponents: Same as above, with one exception: the Great Puma has the abilities of all the other wrestlers combined!

Menu: One player can fight computer-controlled wrestlers, or two players can battle each other.

Scoring: Players don't earn points, they fight to exhaust their opponents. A clock ticks down in real time as you tango.

Strategy: The first order of business is to tire your foe out. The advantage is twofold: not only will he be less powerful on offense, but he'll be limp on defense. For example, if he's tired, it won't be easy for him to roll out of the way when he's down and you go to hit him with a Flying Drop or Flying Body Attack.

The best way to accomplish your goal is through the dependable, less spectac-

ular moves such as the Punch, Body Slam, and Rolling Sole Butt. Be on guard for any fancy stuff your foe tries to pull; get out of the way, then move back in with your measured attack. As she/he begins to flag, proceed to the moderately powerful techniques such as Lariat and Back Drop. Then demolish your foe further with the special moves or rougher basic throws, such as the Pile Driver. If you use certain moves too early—such as the Brain Buster—your opponent may be strong enough to use the leverage to bring you down.

As sometimes happens, you're going to find yourself getting whipped too, especially against the computer. The best thing to do when you find yourself flat on the canvas is to press your control pad or joystick to the side opposite where your gloating foe is standing. That way, when you get to your feet, you'll instantly move away from your opponent, giving you a second or two more to plan a counterattack and marshal your energy.

One tack that few wrestlers take advantage of is fighting outside the ring. As long as you get back inside before twenty

seconds elapses, this is a terrific place to fight. Reason? If your foe is there, it means you tossed him out and he's hurting. Thus, as soon as he crashes down—a Body Slam is a good way to send him flying—head to the middle of the ring, press down the A button, push the control pad toward your fallen nemesis, then use a Plunger to grind him into the floor. Use the B button to force your adversary back into the ring, then continue beating up on him. *Now* is the time to use the Flying Drop or Flying Body Attack, inflicting serious damage. (Make sure you use the B button when you leap, to give extra power to the maneuver.)

Meanwhile, if you really want to shake up a foe—computer or human—take the part of Fighter Hayabusa and do the following. Use a Back Brain Kick against your opponent, then pin him. Get up, use another Back Brain Kick, rise, and repeat. After fifteen Back Brain Kicks the bout will be over without your foe having thrown so much as a punch.

When you finally face the Great Puma, the most effective moves are the Flying Drop and Flying Body Attack. If you

manage to get him outside the ring, the Plunger is very effective against him.

Rating: This old cartridge still offers maniacal fun!

Challenge: B+ (it'll take you a while to master all the moves)

Graphics: B (good animation)

Sound: B

Simulation: B

Cross References: In addition to *WWF Wrestlemania*, which is covered elsewhere in this book, ring buffs can purchase *WCW Wrestling* or *M.U.S.C.L.E.* In *WCW Wrestling* you choose from a dozen different wrestlers, each of whom shares basic moves and also has four special maneuvers. You can play against the computer or with another player, either one-on-one or tag team. The only tip worth imparting on that good but not great cartridge is to open the match using your wrestler's special ability. Unlike *Pro Wrestling*, it's a good idea to weaken your opponent right away. Not only will that make it easier to hit him again, but he'll be less able to use his own specialty. As for *M.U.S.C.L.E.*, which features tag-team excitement, this underrated cartridge has a Booster Ball that enters the ring and

endows whoever gets it with special powers. Tactfully, you'd be wise to avoid it. Let it distract your opponent: when he or she breaks concentration and makes a move to get it, beat them to a pulp. The best way to overcome an adversary normally is by using a Back Drop in the center of the ring. When he tries to rise after that, hit him with another Back Drop. You'll have to scrape him off the canvas to continue the match. Also, it's a good idea not to *back* away when your adversary uses a Flying Body Attack. When you see it coming, *sidestep* or *hop* his airborne form—you save time that way—run to the ropes, launch the same assault, and hit your foe when he's sprawled on the ground, still recovering from his failed attack.

Racket Attack

Type: Tennis.

Manufacturer: Jaleco.

Objective: The instructions say it best: "Smash, volley, and slice your way to the winning point."

Layout: The court is displayed from above and behind one of the participants. After the serve, the view shifts to a slightly higher perspective. When you play the computer, the machine is always on the far court. When you play another person, you constantly switch sides.

Hero: Here's your chance to feel like the *opponents* of Navratilova or Lendl by getting blown off the court! You select one of eight men or women players, each of

whom has different strengths and weaknesses as described in the instruction booklet. You also choose the court surface—hard, clay, or grass, which provides the most to least bounce, respectively.

Opponents: When you play the computer, the NES gets to select a player after you do. Thus, the computer chooses a player whose skills prey upon the weaknesses of the racketeer you chose!

Menu: One player can battle another player or the computer.

Scoring: You compete for points. There are five points to each game, six games in a set.

Strategy: To begin with, there are so many possible combinations of surface and player match-ups that no one strategy could possibly apply. However, there *are* a few tips that will help you.

During play against the computer, the best strategy is to hit from side to side, switching from forehand to backhand, forcing the computer player to run. This is what it does *worst*. To help you accomplish this, it's extremely useful to angle your shots. This is best done by delaying your swing a moment. When the ball's

coming at you, and you see exactly where it's headed, step around to the side of it. Hit the ball when it's *beside* you, not in front of you.

When you serve to the computer, if you're having trouble hitting the computer's return, change your serve . . . and not just from spin to straight to slice, as described in the instructions. Move your player around before you hit the B button to serve. You won't get the ball past the computer, but you will get a different shot *back*. When you find a return you can hit on that playing surface, stick with the serve that generated it. Upon serving to the computer, toss the ball up and hit it when it's on or just below the service line. (We're talking 2-D space here, not 3-D space. In other words, when it *looks like* the white line is passing through the ball.) That'll give you a clean, strong serve regardless of whether or not you use a special serve. In a two-player game, when you serve on the opposite side of the net: on the left side, swing when the ball is just on top of the circular design before the word *Jaleco*; on the right side, swing when the ball is in the top half of the *O* in *Jaleco*.

When the computer serves, don't necessarily stand still and wait for the ball. By moving to the net a step or two, many players can hit a beauty of a shot right down the sideline, just fair. A really skilled player can even charge the net on the serve and tip it over, just clear of the net on the far side. But that maneuver takes practice.

Overall, many players find that the best player/surface combination against the computer is Carter on grass. In any case, here are passwords which will bring you to successive levels of play: JSLPVYC, GKVYLWC, PSFRCHC, KYIMYDD (that's i), IXKOWCD (also i), and RYTONMD.

Rating: You won't be mastering this one in an hour or two, or even a day or two. It'll take long hours of often frustrating practice before you can launch your own racket attack.

Challenge: B

Graphics: D (visuals are the game's one serious problem. The animation of the players is so slow that they often complete the swing nearly a full second after you've punched in the action! And from some angles it isn't even neces-

sary to connect with the ball for it to be returned—while from other angles you'll swear you hit the ball, yet it'll just lie there like a lox.)

Sound: D+ (the voice synthesizer is good, but the tinkly music is an earsore, and the crowd sounds are anemic)

Simulation: C+ (aside from the graphics problems, it's virtually impossible to keep from being stuffed if the ball comes right at you. Worse, there isn't a sweet spot on the racket, something that could have been remedied with a different point of view, lower and closer to the racket. And the computer is the ultimate wimp player: it *always* lets out-of-bound balls go, something no human player ever does.)

Cross References: Nintendo's *Tennis* cartridge for the NES—not to be confused with *Tennis* for Game Boy, covered elsewhere in this book—is more fun than this cartridge, but it's also superflat, like the old *Pong* videogame from the early 1970s. Frankly, you'd do better to skip both of these and play *Arkanoid*, still the best of the paddle-type games.

RBI Baseball

(A Tengen Game)

Type: Abner Doubleday's brainchild.

Manufacturer: Tengen. This game is not designed, manufactured, sponsored or endorsed by Nintendo.®

Objective: Knock the stitches off the ball if you're batting; fan the batter if you're pitching; and save the pitcher's no-hitter if you're fielding.

Layout: The screen shows the batter and pitcher from above and behind the batter; thanks to split screen, all of the bases can be seen on the sides and top of the screen. When a ball is knocked into the outfield, the scene changes to an over-

head view which scrolls as the ball soars toward the grandstand.

Hero: Players can select from ten different teams, each of which has its good and bad points. Regardless of the team, the batter can be positioned according to the player's wishes, and he can also bunt. Base runners can be controlled. Pitches can be selected, along with the pitcher's position on the mound, and fielders can be maneuvered.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: One player takes the field against the computer, or two players slug it out against each other.

Scoring: A trip around the bases earns a run.

Strategy: Let's get the purely fun-stuff out of the way first: when the title screen appears, simultaneously press Start, the A button, and the B button, and you'll get to see the programmers' screen. That's worth forty-plus bucks, right?

This game requires some planning to play when you're in the field—and that's not an asset. The problem is that the outfielders run in lockstep. Thus, if there's a pop fly, and you send your right fielder running toward center field, the center fielder will automatically head for left

field. If you decide, suddenly, that you want your center fielder to handle it, he has to recross the part of the field through which he was unwillingly dragged by the right fielder. The moral: don't reflexively chase the ball as it flies overhead, hoping to catch up to it. Think about where it's going and bring a fielder running *toward* it, not *after* it.

The infield is easier to work. There, you want to get your player directly under the shadow of fly balls. Infield pops tend to go up and down, making much less of an arc and, thus, falling nearly directly in their shadow.

If you're going after a fly ball, don't get directly under its shadow. Stay the length of your man *over* it; that is, with your player slightly ahead of the ball, in the direction it's headed. The ball arcs as it falls, and this is the only way you'll catch it.

At bat, keep your eye on the catcher. If he shifts to one side, you know where the ball's headed. Also, inside and outside pitches in this game tend to be pretty exaggerated, so *do* watch the ball as it heads your way. On the other hand, the

ump seems to call just about anything near the strike zone a strike, so be ready to swing at anything that is within reach.

When pitching, be sure to keep your eye on the base runners, especially when you're playing the computer, which steals routinely. (Some teams, like Houston, steal more than others.) The pitching combination that usually works best against human batters is a fast sinker-ball, largely because its drop is something that can't be seen very well on a two-dimensional TV. Computer teams vary in their skills, but very few of the players fall for the curveball right or the screwball left. However, that can work to your benefit. Try and catch the upper tip of either box in which the batters stand. Though the pitch will tend to be inside or outside, depending upon the box, you'll just catch the strike zone. If the batter doesn't swing, it'll be a called strike.

Now... for a real thrill (?), when you're on the title screen, press start, A, and B simultaneously. You'll get to see (gasp!) the names of the game programmers.

Rating: Tengen's games are usually excellent; this one's the exception.

Challenge: D+ (the pudgy little outfielders and the ball move much too slowly, resulting in clumsy, frustrating defense)

Graphics: C+ (the behind-the-batter view is better than the behind-the-pitcher graphics of most games)

Sound: F (this game has the crummiest music in the history of videogames. Make that the crummiest in the history of music.)

Simulation: D-

Cross References: See separate entries on *Tecmo Baseball*, *Bases Loaded*, *Major League Baseball*, *Baseball Stars*, and *Game Boy Baseball*.

Ring King

Type: Boxing contest.

Manufacturer: Data East.

Objective: Beat your foes insensate.

Layout: The fight is viewed from the side, slightly above the heads of the boxers. The ring scrolls in all directions as the fighters move around it.

Hero: The first time you enter the ring, you have no experience: just a repertoire of defensive moves and punches (each of which is explained in the instruction booklet). As you meet each successive foe, you rise through the rankings and your endurance also increases (see *Scoring*). A P thrown into the ring during

bouts will boost your strength if you can grab it.

Opponents: You fight increasingly tougher foes with quaint names such as A. Madman.

Menu: You can fight a friend or the computer.

Scoring: You win Power Points as you fight, which enhance your endurance.

Strategy: The most effective blow in this game is the uppercut, especially if delivered when you have a lot of power, and particularly if you've been able to maneuver your adversary onto the ropes. Actually, there is a more effective move you can make . . . even though it isn't exactly legal. When the Training Gym screen comes on, push the following:

1. *A button on controller two*
2. *A button, Select, and A on controller one*
3. *B button on controller two*
4. *Select button on controller one*
5. *A button, then B button on controller two*
6. *B button on controller one twice*

When you push Start to begin the game, you'll never be hurt!

If you want some additional—and le-

gal!—assistance, try this code to help you along: 0KYYMMI30B9 (those are two zeroes in there).

Rating: This is one of those games that gets a bum rap because it's "old." Do yourself a favor and give it a try. It's more exciting than a shelf full of clonelike martial-arts games!

Challenge: B (you have to think as well as move your proxy boxer)

Graphics: B (very good animation and excellent character design)

Sound: B+

Simulation: B (you'll feel like you had a workout, only you won't have any bruises to show for it!)

Cross References: The only other boxing game is the champ, *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!*

Slalom

Type: Skiing contest.

Manufacturer: Nintendo of America.

Objective: Players must ski down increasingly difficult courses, avoiding the many obstacles that crop up.

Layout: The view is from behind the skier as she/he races down the slopes. The courses are the same every time you play, though each is different from every other. The further you progress in the game, the more curves and obstacles you face. (See *Enemies* for obstacles.)

Hero: The skier has the ability to shift from side to side and to jump. Speed can only be attained by avoiding collisions, which slow you down. Bonus points are

awarded for fancy moves, which can only be performed by using the moguls like ramps and skiing over them, rather than leaping them.

Obstacles: There are six in all:

Drone Skiers: they race the course with you and try to nudge you aside or squeeze you into flagpoles when you pass by.

Trees: these appear solo or arranged in diagonal rows. There's no jumping them, and a collision will leave you an inert slab of slalomi, costing the most time of any obstacle.

Snowmen: arranged like the trees, also very costly timewise.

Sledders: kids who slide horizontally in front of you, often in different directions.

Flags: you'll slow down if you fail to pass through the pairs of flags. However, you'll lose even more time if you collide with a pole because you weren't properly positioned to pass through them.

Moguls: these aren't dangerous unless you use one as a ramp and don't come down again until you run out of steam. In other words, try to milk every last point out of these "freestyle" moves, and you'll come down in a heap.

The stationary obstacles always appear at the same place. The moving obstacles arrive the same each time but, obviously, stay or leave depending upon what you do.

Menu: There are three different courses, each of which is broken down into a series of increasingly difficult runs. These

■ ■ ■

Snowy Hill: Qualifying Run, Cotton Candy, Skid Row, Snowy Slide, Crystal Cruise, Overrun, Big Dipper, and Blue Mongoose.

Steep Peak: Qualifying Run, Teaser, Blue Max, The Whoosh, High Octane, Rock and Role, Downhill Monster, and Super Downhill.

Mt. Nasty: Qualifying Run, In the Trees, Cut Loose, Hot Dog Heaven, Rad Run, Paradise, Exterminator, and Freestyle.

And sorry, folks: there's no way to skip ahead to the more difficult runs on each slope. You pros will simply have to ski through the earlier levels.

Scoring: You earn points for speed and for the number and duration of freestyle mogul-jumps you perform.

Strategy: In the easiest of the levels, keep

your eyes primarily on the horizon, so you can see the flags and obstacles as they loom. Most of the difficult courses are best negotiated in a tight zigzag pattern. This is particularly so if you expect to pass through the pairs of flags, which come so rapidly on opposite sides that you don't have time to get to them once they appear. You must cut over immediately after clearing one set.

Regardless of the level, the fundamental technique you need to master is pressing forward on the controller—using *just* your thumb if you have the basic controller—simultaneously jockeying from side to side.

Defensively, simultaneously leap and move in the opposite direction whenever you approach a Drone. The only time you have to hunker down and fight one is when flags are near, since they'll try to muscle you out of the way as they go through. If you're slightly ahead of them, nudge them aside and you'll be in the clear. If they're ahead of you, don't try to pass through the flags. The Drones will bump you aside, costing you far more time than if you skipped the flags.

If you want to have some fun that re-

quires no skill whatsoever, try the following when you run out of time on a run. Set the A and B buttons on turbo. On many of the courses, your industrious little skier will keep on going!

Rating: This one's fun, though the sameness of the obstacles becomes tedious after a while.

Challenge: B (if you like trying to shave seconds off your time, you'll enjoy this)

Graphics: B (cartoonish graphics on the skier and drone are offset by excellent perspective visuals as the flags, etc., which grow larger with your approach)

Sound: C- (snow and wind sounds should have been nifty instead of the static they've got here)

Simulation: B

Cross References: You can also ski in *World Games*, covered elsewhere in this book.

Super Dodge Ball

Type: International dodge-ball competition.

Manufacturer: CSG Imagesoft Inc.

Objective: Throwing a ball and hitting players on the opposite side of the net.

Layout: The game is viewed from a slightly elevated position on the side as the two teams fight. The court scrolls slightly from side to side as the ball is tossed.

Hero: There are eight teams, each of which has special strengths and weaknesses as outlined in the instruction booklet. Moreover, certain players on each team have special abilities, which are also outlined in the instructions. Regardless of their unique strengths, each player can walk or run, pass, catch, or throw the

ball, leap, and duck. Inner court players tend to be more powerful. Your players are unable to acquire additional stores of energy: once they're hit, that power is lost forever!

When playing the computer, field Sam, Bill, and Steve of the American team. Sam's Blaster is extremely useful, especially against the Indian team star Rajiv. Bill's Lightning is extremely helpful against China—he can beat up to two dozen points off a player!—while Steve's Spear and occasional Breaker can be devastating. The other Americans are also potent: John and Mike specialize in Sidewinders, though John usually throws a Psycho when he jumps. Randy's forte is a Stinger.

Opponents: Same as above. When you fight the computer, the teams come up in this sequence, which is also their order of difficulty: Pro All-Stars, England, India, Iceland, China, Kenya, Japan, and the USSR.

Menu: One player can challenge the computer, or two players can clobber one another.

Scoring: Scoring is based on a loss of energy. The degree of each player's energy loss

depends upon the power of the hit they take from an opposing player.

Strategy: Whether you're playing the computer or another person, a few general rules apply. First, protect your most powerful offensive players. You'll need their strength to battle the tough enemy foes. Second, watch your opponent's lineup and activate an appropriate defensive player. For example, if there's a powerful thrower "on deck," be certain that your best catcher is receiving. Even if he's low on energy, let him take the hit: better to take the fifty/fifty chance that he'll be further debilitated than risk the near certainty that a bad catcher will be destroyed. Third, when a jump shot is thrown and disappears briefly off the top of the screen, watch the shadow it casts so you'll know where it's going to hit.

Passing is also something to be aware of, both on your side of the net and your enemy's side. Offensively, catch with a strong catcher and pass to a strong thrower. Move the ball from the Outer Court to the Inner Court in order to spike it. Conversely, when you see your foe pass, shift your defense accordingly. If you see a pass heading toward the Inner

Court, be prepared to jump up and block the spike. If you see the ball going to a powerful thrower, get ready to activate your strongest catcher.

As important as passing is, recovering the ball is just as important. If one of your players gets beaned, rush someone over to recover the ball pronto. Otherwise, one of your foe's Outer Court may get it and launch a second, possibly fatal strike against the downed man. Naturally, if you clobber one of your foes, try to recover the ball in a hurry and hit *him* again!

Really proficient players enjoy two strategies that wreak considerable damage against adversaries. One is an over-the-centercourt-line jump shot. You can literally leap into your opponent's territory, as long as you let the ball go while you're still airborne. Because you're closer to them, the damage is that much more severe. By the same token, if they catch the ball and bash you before you get back to your side, the damage will be considerable.

The other neat tack is trapping an opposing player on the centercourt line. If they come over to hit you—not even

crossing the line, but just coming up to it—don't bother having the player that caught the ball take it to the backcourt and bring it up again. Have him catch it, flip it to the back, and have the receiver hit your foe before he has a chance to retreat. Doing the unexpected is one of the keys to winning *Super Dodge Ball*!

Rating: Fun for one or at a party, and a great game for all different age and experience groups.

Challenge: A

Graphics: B (image breakup is annoying, but there's fine animation and wonderful scenery)

Sound: A (great music and sound effects)

Simulation: B+ (you really get a feeling of power when you hurl the ball!)

Cross References: If you enjoyed this game, take a look at *Kings of the Beach*, which offers over-the-net gamers a chance to strut (and spike) their stuff.

Tecmo Baseball

Type: Full-field, full-team baseball.

Manufacturer: Tecmo.

Objective: Pitch, hit, field, and run your way through nine innings of play.

Layout: There are two primary screens: one that shows the pitcher and batter from just behind the pitcher, and another that displays the field from well overhead. For this latter screen, the field scrolls in whichever direction the ball is hit.

Hero: The player chooses from fourteen different teams, each of which has good and bad points that are detailed in the instruction booklet. When batting, you can move the batter closer to the plate, change the height of his swing, and also

bunt. When pitching, you can alter the throw in any direction, hurl a slow ball or fastball, and/or pitch a curve. You can also pick off runners who've taken leads from their bases. When fielding, you can run after the ball and also jump for it—though a failed jump will result in your fielder being spilled to the Astroturf for several seconds. When on base, you can steal.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: There are one-player and two-player games. The game is also equipped with a "Watch" mode, in which you choose the teams, then observe as the computer pits them against each other.

Scoring: You earn a run each time a player moves from third base to home plate.

Strategy: Bad news—the computer fields extremely well. The reason this is such bad news is it's really tough for humans to catch fly balls in the outfield, since you can't see those players until the ball is right over them! So you're going to have to beat the computer teams with pitching and hitting.

Effective pitching is largely a matter of knowing when to send the current pitcher to the dugout. The first three

pitchers on the top of any given roster are the ones who will last the longest. That is, their pitches won't get slow and hittable. They also don't have a broad repertoire of dazzling throws. If you're playing the computer, use them to start. Maintain a steady game so the computer doesn't get desperate. (It really hunkers down when it starts to lose.) If you're playing a human opponent, don't use these steady but flashless pitchers. Go right to the lower names on the roster and try to blow the game open early: the computer might not get discouraged, but people sure do! (Some players maintain that regardless of the opponent, it's better to use the fancy pitchers from the lower three names only in relief, since they tire quickly. If you get results that way, obviously that's right for you. Our approach is a little bolder . . . but that's often what makes the difference between a champ and a chump!)

When you're batting, the key things to remember are these. First, just because the pitcher moves, don't assume the ball's going to be thrown in the direction he's moved. Watch nothing but the ball: everything else is simply a distraction.

Second, if you've got a count of two strikes and no balls, the computer usually throws a ball on the next pitch. The computer also tends to drill a strike on the first pitch, so watch these carefully and be inclined to swing at them. Third, the best time to bunt is if the pitcher is slightly to one side. He isn't as likely to nab the ball then.

As for fielding, this game's pretty pathetic there. If you've got to bring the outfield in to field a ball, press down on the controller; even though you can't see your players, they *are* moving in. A ball thrown from the outfield to one of the bases will never move as fast as you'd like. If a runner's already halfway toward a base, chances are very good you won't be throwing them out. In this respect you should play this cartridge conservatively. Protect home plate and get the outs via the pitching mound, rather than relying on tag outs or catching flies.

Rating: There are a lot of team and player combinations that make this game interesting—varying your starting pitchers, pitting various teams against each other—but that isn't enough to recommend *Tecmo Baseball*.

Challenge: C (pitchers have a relatively easy time throwing strikes, whereas with batters, it's more a matter of luck than skill to hit the ball)

Graphics: B- (okay animation, but the game is by nature pretty static)

Sound: C- (irritating, repetitive music and scratchy crowd sounds; only the bat-hitting-ball sounds are excellent)

Simulation: D

Cross References: *RBI Baseball*, *Bases Loaded*, *Baseball Stars*, *Major League Baseball*, and *Game Boy Baseball* all have their own entries.

Tecmo Bowl

Type: Football.

Manufacturer: Duh . . .

Objective: Get the ball and march your team down the field to score a touchdown or a field goal.

Layout: The field scrolls horizontally as play progresses (or regresses, as the case may be for those of you with butterfingers!)

Hero: There are twelve different teams, each of which has its own strengths and weaknesses as described in the instruction booklet. On offense you have the ability to select a formation, after which you hike the ball, run, dodge tackles, straight-

arm opponents, select a receiver, pass, or kick. On defense you can dodge blocks, tackle, and intercept passes.

Opponents: Same as above. The computer will select a different team each time you play, even if you continually choose the same one.

Menu: One player can battle the computer or another player. There's also a "Coach" mode, in case you want to select the plays and let the computer control both teams (without prejudice, one hopes).

Scoring: As in regulation football, players score six points for a touchdown, three points for a field goal, two points for a safety, and one point for a conversion. In addition to playing for points, teams compete while the clock ticks down.

Strategy: On offense you can gain a lot of yardage on the kickoff return if you run smart. Keep the control pad pressed in the direction you want to go, so that you get going at once when you catch the ball. Run straight up the field, gaining as many yards as possible before the defenders arrive (cutting over to the sidelines accomplishes nothing except to

waste time). Only when the first defenders show up should you slant over, going behind one of your blockers to reach the sidelines—the one nearest you is best: the visuals are clearer. As you run, keep the B button pressed; a straight-arm will almost certainly gain you extra yards.

On any offensive play keep an eye out for an adversary to sneak through your defenses and come at you from behind. Most players tend to be watching receivers or looking for holes for runners; neglect like that can be lethal!

Given an even game with a lot of time, most players opt to keep the ball on the ground for the first two plays. Five yards on each carry will give you a first down, with no risk of interception. Of course, that can become predictable—so you might want to open with a passing play now and then, just to keep your opponent off balance.

If you opt for a running play, the ball carrier will sweep left or right. When he heads upfield and passes the line of scrimmage, you should immediately send him diagonally across the field.

(There will be opposing players near the sidelines, so you don't want to take that route this time.) As he makes this cut, watch the end of the screen to see who's charging down on him. You will almost always have to zigzag, which you should do as tight as possible. Again, the more space you cover diagonally, the less yardage you gain. One thing you must pay particular attention to in running plays is where on the field you were tackled in the last play. If you're too far to the left or right, don't choose a formation that will have your runner sweeping in that direction: he'll have no room to maneuver. And whatever you do, don't retreat when a runner is blitzed. He'll *rarely* get away, and you could lose considerable yardage. Better to straightarm ahead and just try to reach scrimmage.

On passing plays be ready to switch receivers if your original receiver is covered. Interceptions are easy to make in this game, and it's better for the quarterback to take a second longer in the pocket, even risk eating the ball, than to throw to an opposing player.

On defense, if you're ahead and time is low, always program in a passing formation. Let your opponent have the short yardage a run will produce: better that than to be unprepared for a bomb!

For players who enjoy unorthodox combinations and gameplay, you can watch the irresistible force face the immovable object by pitting teams against themselves: 697BFFA5 gives you Chicago vs. Chicago, 5B7FBFA3 lets Washington battle Washington, while CFBFF7AO has Denver scrimmage against Denver. If you want to go right to the most challenging match of all, taking the part of New York against a *very* tough Miami team in the Tecmo Bowl, punch in 24AFFDAD. To play New York midway through a winning season, input 264EACAE. Best of all, to have Chicago take the field against an invisible team—gray players on a gray field—use the password 397BFFA5. Washington vs. the Invisibles is 397FBFA5.

Rating: A flawed but entertaining game.

Challenge: B— (open receivers automatically catch whatever you throw)

Graphics: B- (the stocky players look like Gummi Footballers; when there are several of them close together, it's very difficult to tell who's doing what to whom. However, it's fun to watch them hop around like popcorn when there's a pileup.)

Sound: C+ (the music is anything but stirring, and sound effects are negligible. The voice synthesizer is good, however.)

Simulation: B+ (kickoff returns, running plays, and setting up to pass under pressure are all extremely realistic)

Cross References: See separate entry on *John Elway's Quarterback*. Also available is *NFL Football*, in which you choose teams and can actually add talent to bolster areas in which you're weak. (The charge for such Deals with the Devil? You're vulnerable to a greater number of fumbles and penalties.) There are a slew of plays to choose from, and you control the players more or less as you do in other games. On offense, passes are easier to complete against the computer than in *Tecmo Bowl*, and most players

tend to use these a lot. On defense, the player-controlled team member is the most effective player, regardless of any extenuating factors.

Toobin'

(A TENGEN GAME)

Type: Ride an inner tube down a river.

Manufacturer: Tengen. This game is not designed, manufactured, sponsored or endorsed by Nintendo.®

Objective: To go down each successive river, collecting objects for points and avoiding various obstacles.

Layout: There are dozens of different rivers, each of which twists and turns differently. All scroll vertically as you tube ahead.

Hero: Your radical tuber Bif or Jet can swim ahead, move from side to side, backpeddle to the top of the screen—which will

push him ahead as it scrolls down—and throw Cans to destroy obstacles. If you strike an obstacle and sink (see *Obstacles and Opponents*), your supply of Cans will be replenished. There are also Whirlpools at various points along some rivers. These are usually surrounded by obstacles; if you can shoot your way in, the Whirlpools will advance you to distant levels. Shooting other obstacles is important, not just to clear a path for you, but also to uncover Letters: if you spell TOOBIN, you get rewarded mightily.

Obstacles and Opponents: There are over thirty different kinds of challenges. There are Twigs and Coral, which rip holes in your tube and sink you; Currents, which rush you downstream faster than you might like; human foes, such as Fisherpeople casting lines—their hooks tear open your tube—Cavepeople throwing axes, Banditos shooting at you, and others; animal enemies ranging from Fish to Crocodiles to Water Buffalo to sunbathing Brontosauri and a Creature from the Black Lagoon lookalike; and many more. Though there's no clock, time is also an enemy: the longer you take to negotiate a river,

the fewer the Cans to be found. Although you can blast most enemies into oblivion with Cans, they will eventually return. The farther you get in the game, the faster they will come back to the screen (like, within three seconds by the Jurassic river, and two seconds by Brontosauri). Obstacles are always in the same location from game to game. As for the human adversaries you'll face, on the relatively easy Class One rivers, they'll wait from two to three seconds before launching new volleys. By the time you reach Class Three, however, not only will they be throwing or shooting at random times, they'll be aiming directly at you!

Menu: There is a mode for one player, or for two players taking alternating turns.

Scoring: You earn points for gathering the green Treasure Chests, and you multiply your score by passing through gates. (Note: if you collide with a gate, its multiple value goes down. However, you can pass it yet still get the multiple by back-paddling and coming back up into the gate.) As you proceed downriver, you can also pick up Cans to replenish your supply.

Strategy: A few general tips—in uncharted waters, hold up at the top of the river, letting the screen scroll along so you can see what's ahead. That'll cost you time, but caution is a better tack than greed. Also, if you need to slow down or change direction, don't hesitate to throw your Tube against the shore. It isn't a pretty move, but it works!

Here are strategies to get you through the first four rivers. After that, only fast reflexes and a sharp mind will help you.

Colorado: Avoid the first rapids by staying to the left. At the fork in the river, go down the left side, by the small islands. If you want to warp ahead, do the following: shoot the Twigs to the left, then quickly come up around the bottom of the promontory and get into the Whirlpool. This will transport you to Warp Zone One. There, if you head down the corridor on the right—the one with the rapids—you'll be hurtled ahead to the Class Three river Brontosauri. If you go down the near corridor, on the left, you'll come to a Whirlpool which will fling you to the Class Four river Nevada, which immediately batters you with a

murderous Waterspout. (How to avoid it? Cans are useless against it, so zigzag wide a few times, then circle around the Waterspout as it closes in, and paddle ahead *fast*! Beware, though, because the Fish in Nevada not only swim at you horizontally, but diagonally as well.) If you don't want to warp ahead at all, forget about the Twigs. Get the Six-pack of Cans on the left, then hurry over to the right side and continue to the bottom of the river. There, collect the Cans in the shape of an arrow before diving into the Whirlpool.

Okefenokee: Fisherpeople will be attacking you from the shore the entire length of the river. They will appear in this order: left, right, left, left, center, right, center (two of them, facing both ways). Watch for them, and either rush ahead or backpaddle to avoid their clutches. When you start out on the river, go down the right side for a pair of thousand-point gates. There's also a Six-pack on the right. Shoot the first Twig after the Six-pack, and slide over to the center of the screen. Then shoot the Twig that was under it: there's an O hidden inside. Grab

it, as it'll zoom away in three seconds. Stay mostly to the right on this river, until you're near the end. You'll know the end is coming when you see three dark humps in the water. Get over to the left, which is the side the Whirlpool to the next level is on: those three dark humps are the back of the Lagoon Monster, who's going to rise and give chase. If you stay on the right, you'll have a tough time crossing over in time.

Rio Grande: Banditos will be shooting a wedgelike spray of bullets at you along the way. If you get caught in the midst of one of these, you're going to have to nurse your Tube through: move ahead and backpaddle as you maneuver around individual bullets. When you pass the second Bandito, hurry to the right to avoid the one in the center, shooting left. The fourth Bandito is on the right, so go to the left quickly after avoiding the third gunslinger. The fifth one's on the right, the sixth is on the left, and the seventh is on the right . . . all one after another. The eighth is by the Whirlpool; to avoid this one, your best bet is to circle clockwise around the bullets,

then swing toward the exit. You have three seconds between rounds of fire from each Bandito.

Jurassic: Go after the first Cans from underneath, since the Twigs grow back too quickly. The Brontosaurus's tail really isn't a problem if you don't mind getting slapped a little. A Crocodile appears on the right side right after you encounter the dinosaur, so watch it. Following that menace, you've got a Neanderthal on the left tossing an axe, followed by another Brontosaurus on the right, then a Caveman on the left, and then Cavemen left and right. Specific strategies begin to falter here: a road map is going to do you little good unless you've got the reflexes to make your way through!

One last suggestion, though: if you really get in a jam, hit the pause button. The screen will freeze as is, giving you time to study it and figure out your best move before resuming play.

Rating: An excellent game, with one caveat: Tengen deserves a big, fat *boo* for not saying *what* kind of Cans the tuber is collecting. Hopefully, they're soda cans. However, by not stating that, the manu-

facturer leaves open the possibility that they're beer cans, something utterly irresponsible for a youth-oriented video-game.

Challenge: A

Graphics: B- (details are pretty fuzzy, though the water effects and many of the critters are well done)

Sound: A- (different music for each river is always appropriate)

Simulation: B+ (the tube responds just like its real-life counterpart)

Cross References: Having to go through gates is reminiscent of *Slalom*. However, *Toobin'* also closely resembles two other games: "Canoeing" on *Track & Field II*, and "Slalom Skiing" on *World Games*. See separate entries for all three games.

Track & Field II

Type: Series of Olympic events.

Manufacturer: Konami.

Objective: You must qualify in early heats so that you can compete in medal competition.

Layout: The point of view is different depending on the game, either viewed from the side or from over the shoulder. The courses are the same from game to game.

Hero: You're a remarkable athlete, equally adept—we hope!—in fifteen separate sports. Your abilities in each game are as follows:

Fencing: moving forward or backward, blocking, or thrusting high, centrally, or low

Triple Jump: running and jumping

Freestyle Swimming: swimming with the Crawl or Butterfly

High Diving: couch Louganises can choose from Forward, Back, Reverse, Twist, and Hand Stand dives

Clay Pigeon Shooting: releasing the pigeon, aiming, and firing

Hammer Throw: spinning and throwing

Taekwondo: ducking and retreating on defense, moving in, punching, kicking to the center or high, and delivering "roundhouse" (pinwheel) kicks

Pole Vault: raising or lowering the bar, running, then planting the bar and going over

Canoeing: going forward, backward, left, and right

Archery: raising or lowering the bow, drawing back the string, then letting 'er rip

Hurdles: running and leaping

Horizontal Bar: rotating on the bar and performing various maneuvers

Hang Gliding: running and taking off, then rising, falling, and moving left and right

Pistol Shooting: aiming and firing

Arm Wrestling: pushing against your foe's arms

Opponents: Other athletes, every bit as qualified as yourself, as well as the obstacles on each course.

Menu: There's a Training Mode that allows you to hone your skills; a Vs. Mode to tackle other players in *Fencing*, *Tae-kwondo*, and *Arm Wrestling*; and an Olympic Mode, in which you will procede from event to event, competing against the computer.

Scoring: In some games you go after points; in others, all you have to do is win.

Strategy: Here are tips for the games where you have to do more than simply pump fast!

Fencing: The best way to win this game is to take one step forward at the beginning of the match, press the controller down, and repeatedly hit the A button. You'll win over ninety percent of the time.

Freestyle Swimming: Use the Butterfly stroke. Jump fast between A and B to get the best speed *and* keep up your oxygen.

High Diving: Don't overrotate or point down too early. If you're doing a clock-

wise dive, have your arms at the 4:00 position just before you hit the water. They'll be a perfect 6:00 when you hit. Likewise, in a counterclockwise dive, position yourself at 8:00 just before you hit. If you find that you're coming down at a bad angle, go into a tuck or two to get out of it quickly.

Clay Pigeon Shooting: The target will always be launched from the gray area at random: never in the same order, and not necessarily from alternating sides. Slide the gunsight over when the pigeon is launched, and take your best shot. If you miss, don't reflexively fire a second shot. Slide the sight to where the target is coming down and shoot at it there. Though it'll be farther away and, hence, smaller, you'll have more time to aim. You get the same score whether you hit it on the way up or down.

Hammer Throw: Use one finger to rotate the control pad—preferably the index finger—pushing it around as though you were rubbing ointment on a sore muscle. Really work up a head of steam before you release. Or—cheat. Release the hammer when the angle is approximately 80 degrees. It'll only go a short

distance, but the throw will score over 92 meters!

Taekwondo: The roundhouse is the killer move here. Stand still and wait for your foe; if he's wary, edge forward. As soon as you're in range, let loose a barrage and he'll go down, regardless of what he throws back at you.

Pole Vault: You'll succeed better the lower you hold the pole. On your approach, punch the power meter up until it's nearly to the numeral that indicates the number of players. Otherwise, your jump will be modest at best.

Canoeing: In general, press the controller only half as fast as you jab the A button, so you can quickly adjust your course as you travel, and stay away from the banks, which will only slow you down. As you proceed, keep your eyes on the *top* of the screen, watching to see where each new gate is located. As you pass through the one before it, ride the inside of the block—actually touching it—using the block as a lever to slingshot you to the next gate.

Archery: In 30-meter archery, aim approximately at the 00 or 01 level—the more the wind, the higher—and draw the

bow to the center of the U in the word UP. In the 50-meter match, go to 03 or 04 and pull a little harder. For 70 meters, aim the bow between 05 and 06; and go to either 08 or 09 for the 90-meter target. *Horizontal Bar:* Try not to perform the same stunt twice in a row. You get more points for mixing things up.

In case curiosity (or ego!) gets the best of you, and you want to try some of the later levels right away, the following codes will allow you to go right to the sixth, seventh, and eighth days of competition, respectively:

XAXF6VJNC

TAIIKUJ5I

4ZIIPJJ5S

Those are all letter I, not number 1.

The following codes will bring you to the final days of the respective countries:

US: 1SS3KVJ5C (the #1)

USSR: JSSFKVJWC

Korea: 4DG3KVJY4

Japan: SSGFKVJPC

China: CDGFKVJS4

West Germany: NDG3KVJT4

Canada: ILS3KVJDC

Kenya: YSG3KVJ30

France: 2LSFKVJCC

UK: AYSFKVJMC

Rating: Individually, none of the contests is as exciting as games devoted to just one sport. However, the pressure of having to triumph progressively in many different sports will satisfy most videogamers. This is also a terrific party cartridge.

Challenge: C+ (how much of a challenge can it be repeatedly punching the A button for speed? On the other hand, the target games, especially Archery, get a B+)

Graphics: B

Sound: D (the music is repetitious and silly)

Simulation: B (the target games are B+)

Cross References: There's diving in *World Games*, while fans of blasting defenseless animals can quicken their pulses with *Duck Hunt*. Taekwondo buffs will want to have a look at *Double Dragon*, *Ninja Gaiden*, *Karate Champ*, *Kung Fu*, and the other martial-arts cartridges. Wrestling devotees should try *Tag Team*, *Wrestle-*

mania, Pro Wrestling, and M.U.S.C.L.E. For other Olympic-style competition, there are the original *Track & Field* (more running, shooting, and jumping), *Stadium Events* (dashes, jumps, and hurdles), and *Winter Games*.

World Games

Type: Olympic-style competition.

Manufacturer: Epyx.

Objective: To win in a series of unusual sports events.

Layout: Except for Slalom, which is viewed from above, all games are seen from the sides.

Hero: You have the potential to be a brilliant athlete in the following sports:

Weight Lifting: snatch weights or perform a clean and jerk

Barrel Jumping: skate, build up speed, and jump from three to (ha!) nineteen barrels

Cliff Diving: jump off a cliff, move close

to or far from the rocks, enter the water with good form, and surface

Slalom Skiing: knit your way between the poles

Log Rolling: turn the log underfoot, reversing direction at will and trying to spill your fellow logroller

Bull Riding: stay in the saddle while the bull goes through wild gyrations

Caber Toss: walk with the big log, building up speed, then toss it

Sumo Wrestling: lock arms with a stegosaurus-sized foe, and try to throw him from the ring

Opponents and Obstacles: In most games, the course, weights, etc. are your foes. The exceptions:

Log Rolling: a sure-footed lumberjack on the opposite end of the log, who's also trying to send you into the drink

Bull Riding: five successively more aggressive toros: Ferdinand, Elmer, Bob, Tornado, and Earthquake

Sumo Wrestling: the computer wrestler is particularly well-versed in making fat men suffer!

Menu: Players compete in all the events in turn, or they may can choose which ones

they want to play. You can play alone or compete against others.

Scoring: Points are awarded for some matches—usually based on good form—while winning is all that's required in others.

Strategy: These are the tips you'll need to ensure victory in those events that require more than rapid jabs on the A button:

Weight Lifting: The snatch is easy. On clean and jerk, pause after the fourth step for a second to gain strength for the final heave.

Barrel Jumping: If you're using a control pad instead of a joystick, hold it in your palm, pad section on top. Put two fingers together and *slide* them across the pad, rather than jabbing. You'll build up speed and, just as important, be able to maintain it. Simply poking from side to side gives the skater a crucial fraction of a second to slow down.

Cliff Diving: Watch the gauge on the top left of the screen, and start to straighten out when you reach the second white marker from the bottom. When you feel really daring, leap and move right an increment—yes, right—closer to the cliff.

You'll still clear the rocks as you descend, but you'll earn more points for courage.

Slalom Skiing: Don't try to pass dead center through the flags. Swing around the one nearest the set just below them. That way, you're already facing in the right direction as you come from between the flags.

Log Rolling: With the keypad, speed is best achieved by placing a thumb on either side and jockeying side to side. The *instant* you get the log rolling fast, change direction. The computer-controlled player usually falls.

Bull Riding: This one's pretty simple, though you should be aware that when the instructions say "press" on the controls, they mean just that: hold them down, rather than poking them repeatedly.

Caber Toss: The perfect place to release the log is just before the red line directly to the left of the doorway of the second tent from the left. Heave the log and release it when the top is pointing in the 2:00 direction.

Sumo Wrestling: The best way to beat the computer is to stay still and wait until

the computer wrestler engages you. When he does, do the following, all in *rapid succession*:

1. *Use a forward push.*
2. *Switch to a forward grab.*
3. *Segue into a back pull.*
4. *Execute another forward grab.*
5. *Perform a utchari, and he's a beached whale.*

Rating: Overall, a superior omnibus cartridge.

Challenge: B (this is an average grade, since there's a wide range here, with Bull Riding and Caber Toss both fun but rating a C for challenge, and Cliff Diving and Barrel Jumping earning an A)

Graphics: B+ (Barrel Jumping and Cliff Diving offer especially good animation, while the witty visuals in Caber Toss have the log coming down on your head if you fail)

Sound: B (generally very good, though Log Rolling gets an A+ for having the class to use the Monty Python song "I'm a Lumberjack" on the soundtrack)

Simulation: C (face it: until Nintendo comes out with a Freezing Cold Generator or Bucking Seat, there's little a programmer can do to capture the real-life thrills of riding a bull or jumping barrels)

Cross References: *Slalom* offers a different perspective on skiing (see separate entry) while *Track & Field II* serves up more diving. If you enjoyed Sumo Wrestling, look up the entry on *Pro Wrestling*. See *Cross References* in the entry on *Track & Field II* for a listing of other multisport-style games.

WWF Wrestlemania

Type: Realistic wrestling, which means that it's realistic fake wrestling. Got that?

Manufacturer: Acclaim.

Objective: Pinning your adversary.

Layout: The ring is viewed from the side.

Hero: Each of the six proxy wrestlers is based on a noted World Wrestling Federation figure. The fighters' strengths, weaknesses, and specialties are detailed in the instruction booklet, though all can walk—and chew gum at the same time?—bounce off the ropes, perform body slams and back moves, and leap from the turnbuckle pads. These modern-day Neanderthals also turn red when they're

enraged, meaning that their moves are more powerful at those times.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: One player can play alone—either individual matches against computer opponents he/she selects, or battling all the wrestlers in turn in tournament play—two players can fight each other or play a tournament, or up to six players can partake in a tournament.

Scoring: Players battle the clock and energy loss. The latter can be replaced by resting or by waiting for an Energizer to appear. These items are represented by a different symbol for each wrestler: Hulk Hogan's Energizer is a gold X, Andrew the Giant's is a large foot, Bam Bam Bigelow's is fire, Randy Savage's (aka Macho Man) is sunglasses, Ted Biase's (aka Million Dollar Man) is a dollar sign, and Honky Tonk Man's is a guitar.

Strategy: If you want to win for sure, keep the instruction booklet away from your competitors. The moves couldn't be more confusing, at first. But seriously . . .

Whenever possible, go for the body slam, which is the most damaging of all maneuvers. Your best bet is to avoid them entirely, "chickening out" from

confrontations, until their energy level is slightly less than your own (that's the only time you can use the body slam). The instant you have that advantage, hit them with the slam and they're going to wish they were never born. (If you wait too long, their energy will return, or they may get an Energizer!) Although staying out of reach may seem like a cowardly way to wrestle, wait'll you have them pinned. Then you can think of it as a *wise* way to fight.

Another useful aspect of "hanging back" like this is if your foe avoids you because of weakness, he or she is sure to go for the Energizer as soon as it appears. You, however, will be watching for it too, on the left. When it shows up, stay between him/her and the Energizer. Your opponent will have to make a move for it, at which time you'll unleash whatever your specialty is and finish them off.

Rating: Complicated but fun, in a mindless way. It's certainly more fun than watching the loony stuff on pay-per-view!

Challenge: B

Graphics: B (animation is impressive)

Sound: C+ (more grunts, slapping flesh, and roars from the fighters and

crowd would have made this more entertaining)

Simulation: B-

Cross References: The cartridge is a little better than *M.U.S.C.L.E.* and *Tag Team*, but *Pro Wrestling* still has it beat. Check out *World Games* for the entertaining *Sumo Wrestling* contest.

**SPECIAL SECTION
ON GAME BOY**

Game Boy Baseball

Type: Very small baseball game.

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: Hit, run, field, and score!

Layout: The screen looks out from behind and above the batter. When there's a hit, the field scrolls with the ball.

Hero: You choose from one of two teams, and also select from a roster of pitchers. You can adjust your pitcher's position horizontally on the mound, control the speed of the pitch, and also determine whether the ball goes inside or outside. Fielders can run, catch, and throw. Batters can move toward the pitcher, or to or from the plate. Runners can try to steal bases.

Opponents: Same as above.

Menu: One player can battle the computer, or, with a hookup, two players can have at one another.

Scoring: Batting gets you on base; get back to home and you earn a run.

Strategy: When you pitch, you'll discover that the computer is most vulnerable to fastballs thrown without moving the pitcher (that is, straight down the strike zone). Even if the computer hits one of these, it's usually a pop-up to right, easily fielded. The computer batter will get a good piece of most balls thrown inside or slow; it'll occasionally fall for the outside balls. If it doesn't swing at the latter, though, it's a ball called against you!

Fielding, ignore the ball itself but stay under its shadow to catch the flies. Also, here's one trick that'll earn you a number of outs each game. Go after ground balls and wait beside them when they stop. If the computer's cocky runner tries to squeeze another base from the hit, snatch the ball and burn it into the base-

TIP

Batters will find that standing close to the plate yields better results than standing farther away: if a ball is inside, you

can still hit it, something that isn't true if you're too far from the plate and the ball is thrown in the outer reaches of the strike zone.

Incidentally, though everyone does it, it doesn't help a bit to tilt the Game Boy in the direction your fielder is running!

Rating: A very, very satisfying game even when compared to big-screen Nintendo games.

Challenge: B- (the ball moves *very* slowly when thrown from the outfield; somehow, though, the computer's throws always seem to make it in time!)

Graphics: B (delightful, with fluid movement of the players)

Sound: B- (interesting fugue on Sousa's "Washington Post March," though having a hit ball sound like a police siren takes some getting used to!)

Simulation: B-

Cross References: See separate entries on *Tecmo Baseball*, *Bases Loaded*, *Baseball Stars*, *Major League Baseball*, and *RBI Baseball*.

Game Boy Tennis

Type: Lilliputian racket game.

Manufacturer: Nintendo.

Objective: Hit the ball over the net in such a way that your opponent can't hit it back.

Layout: You look out at the court from above and behind your player. In a two-player game you switch off with your opponent; sometimes you're looking out from behind her or his shoulder.

Hero: Players can serve wherever they wish, at slow or fast speed, and they can either volley or smash the ball. By the way: if you swing too early when you serve, and miss the ball, you can usually swing again without a fault being called. Just like in real tennis, right?

Opponents: Same as above. The computer is a very tough, very smart player.

Menu: One player can slug it out with the computer on four different speed levels, or two players—with a pair of Game Boys and a hookup—can smash away at one another.

Scoring: Points progress as in regular tennis: 15, 30, 40, game over (unless there's a tie, in which case a player must win by two points). The serve switches after each set.

Strategy: The first thing you should be aware of—if you haven't already played and had your Nikes worn down—is that the computer is going to make you *run*. It's as likely to serve to the side of the court as it is to serve directly to you, and will smash the ball left and right, backcourt and forecourt—everywhere. So: go right to the center of the court before your opponent serves, stay there as much as possible—except when you see a lob on the way, in which case you should back up—and be prepared to hustle!

When serving, hit the ball when it's even with the line just in front of you. The best one-two punch to use against the computer is to go to the left or right

edge of the court and serve the ball to the opposite side from which you're standing. Use the A button and the control pad left or right for this. If the computer manages to return the serve—which is *not* a given—smash it right back on that side. You can also try slamming it down on the other side, though the computer is frequently able to get over there in time. Note: when you serve the ball so that it comes down near Mario's stand, be aware that he calls shots "out" when they're on the line. He usually lets 'em go when they're on the other side.

Rating: Another winner for Game Boy.

Challenge: B— (the only serious drawback is that the racket's too small. It's tough to see exactly what you're doing on every shot, making luck an essential element in some returns.)

Graphics: B (the ball and players move very smoothly)

Sound: C+ (average music, good crowd sounds)

Simulation: C— (again, that small racket really brings the simulation element down)

Cross References: See separate entry on *Racket Attack*.

Sports Shorts

No, video jock—we don't mean the kind of shorts you *wear*! We mean short *looks* at other sports cartridges for the NES.

Here's an assortment of tips:

Duck Hunt: Play with the brightness control on your TV set. It differs with each set, but if you hit the right setting, your shot will always plug the dug, regardless of where you aim the gun!

Rad Racer: You can advance to the difficult stages of play by doing the following. When the car-selection screen comes on, push the Start button. Watch the tachometer: with every tap of the B button, you'll add two more bars. Each pair of bars signifies another stage of the game. When you're at the level you want, press the controller up and to the right, then hit Start. See *How to Win at Nintendo Games #1* for more tips on this great racing game!

Side Pocket: When the only balls left on the table are the cue ball and one other, the

word ZONE materializes in the upper right corner. If you drive the cue ball into the pocket with the star, the table will go black. Stars will show up everywhere: if you knock the last ball into any pocket, you'll get additional balls or bonus points.

Pro Wrestling: To beat the Great Puma, throw him out of the ring after hurting him. Keep him outside, but climb in yourself before the ten count.

Tag Team Wrestling: Get energy when you're out of the ring by knocking down your opponent and running around while pushing A and B!

Golf (Gameboy): If you don't like the way your tee off went, turn the machine off, then quickly turn it back on and you'll be back at the tee just before your shot. Try this a few times on early holes so you can master the move; it'd be a shame to mess up on the last hole!

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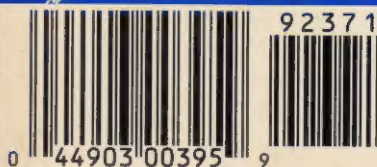
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